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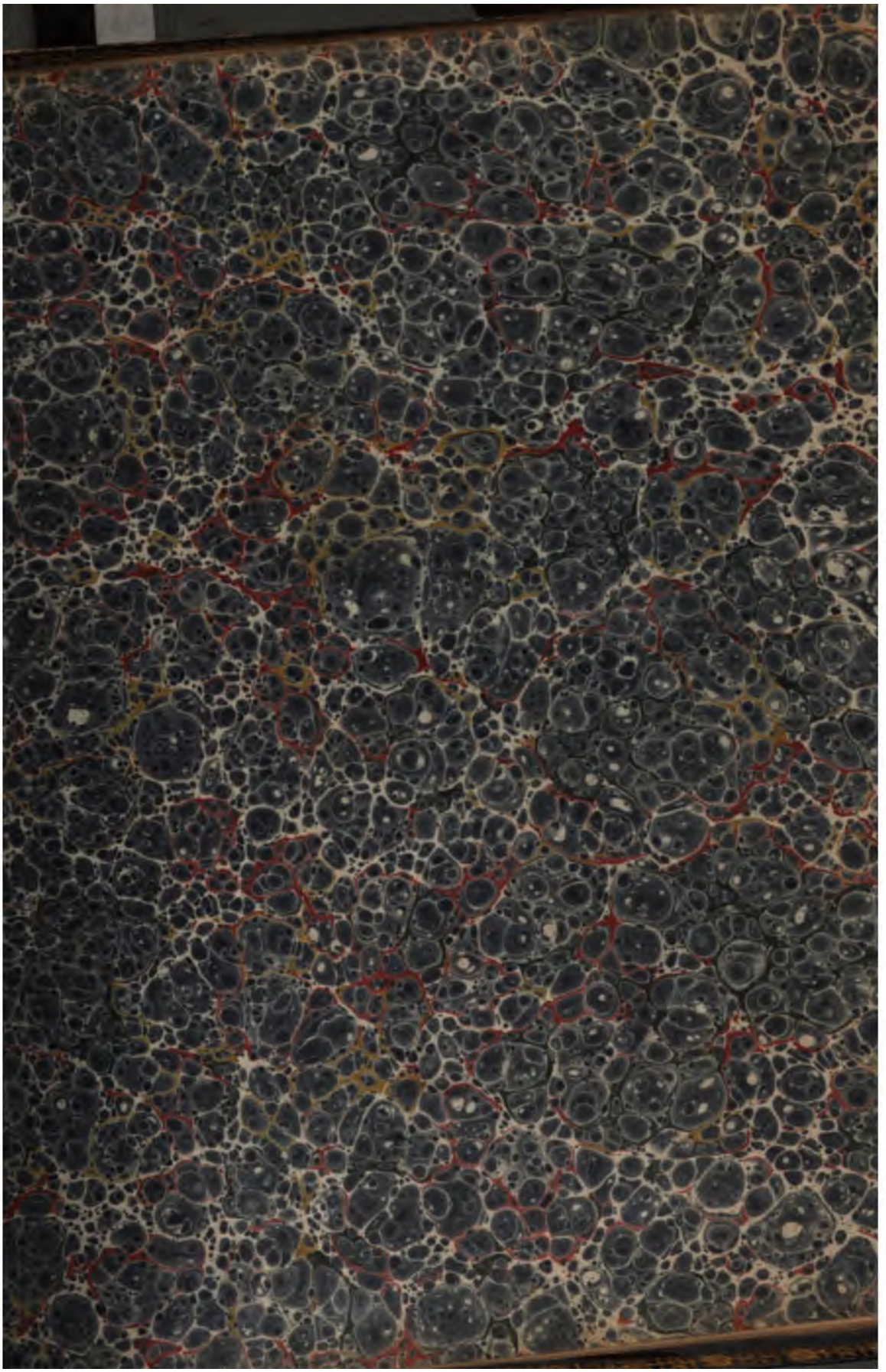

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Though incomplete at the beginning, this book is offered to the Bodleian Library, because it is bound up with the third edition of The Consolations of Charles Phillips, by E. S. Dalgson, 15 July, 1916.

BODLEIAN

GILBERT.

Page 67

W. M. Craig del. J. Dudley fecit.

GILBERT;

OR,

TRUE LOVE REWARDED:

AN

AMATORY RURAL POEM.

In Four Books.

LOVE WILL STILL BE LORD OF ALL.

LONDON:

Printed by James Moyes, Greville Street,

FOR SHERWOOD, NEELY, & JONES, (SUCCESSORS TO H. D. SYMONDS),
20, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1809.

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bear on the mind with irresistible strength; not only to keep the attention fixed, but form, as it were, a fruitful vine, of which Gilbert is the stem. And, if the criterion of real genius is decided to consist in originality, we have it here in a most eminent degree. This author's aim is natural simplicity, and he has fairly won the laurel from all modern competition.

ARISTOTLE very rightly observes, that ability to invent, is, itself, the soul of poetry. An indifferent person may write smooth verses, which, by the helpful aid of classical learning, may be correct in every respect; but yet, if they are destitute of that animative zest, which alone will crown unnumbered faults with immortality, they must sink into oblivion: it ever remains with the inventive powers to raise poetry into estimation; and if an author is in possession of a gift so divine, it enables him to overcome every other difficulty.

'Nor the learn'd exercise of schools,
Nor the stiff pedantry of rules,
Awake in splendid fame,
More high than where those rules can reach,
From Nature's book, which angels teach
To bards who catch the flame.'

Throughout GILBERT the above invaluable property shines with a lustre truly sublime. It is occasionally interspersed with pertinent reflections, that evince a knowledge of man-

kind, which cannot be acquired from books. These are scattered with judgment, and increase our interest in the work itself.

I intend some remarks, by way of critique, on this fascinating poem, to explore a few of its many beauties; and shall dwell a little on the excellent moral which it holds out to the reader. The fable is simply as follows:

Gilbert, by profession a carrier, falls in love with *Jenny*, living at the toll-gate, through which he goes, occasionally, with his tilted cart. Not being able to break his mind properly to the maiden, coldness and reserve on her part ensues, which Gilbert misinterprets, wrongly, into slight. At length he is led to wander abroad in the open country, and strolls about unsettled in his mind, and heavily oppressed with grief. He saves the life of a worthy gentleman, at whose house he meets with the object of his sincere attachment. His mistake is cleared up, and the poem thereupon concludes.

From the foregoing statement it is evident, that it must have required no small share of genius to supply the lack of materials in so barren a subject:. but, what is still more surprising, all the materials are of the richest quality, and easily brought to spring up from the very subject itself. It is a complete prospect of nature; and, when its originality is considered, it seems incredible that it should still be only a modern composition.

How sweetly, but yet with what force, does the poet strike upon his theme proposed! It is a fine transition, when he touches on the clang of WAR, and gives the very report and echo of the exploding engines;—

'While dreadful guns loud roar,
Vent fire and smoke, and shake the rattling shore;'

To say immediately after,

'I sing of Nature, and a Lover's pains;
Woods, rivers, rocks, and fields, excite my humbler strains.'

It is the swell of a full organ dying away to the soft and delicate tones of a melodious harp; which, as it came unexpectedly, gave me the greater pleasure. I was no longer alive to any trivial faults, or verbal errors—I perused the whole poem with an ecstacy that bordered on enthusiasm.

The labourer, working on the highway, expresses his plaint in the bitterest style: indignant at his poverty, which he attributes to his wife and children, he regrets the old enjoyments of his youthful days, envying *Gilbert* that single life which leaves him at full liberty to go where he pleases. We hardly can bestow on him any pity, of which he seems utterly unworthy. The reply Gilbert makes discovers a happy contrast of sentiment.

Nell's sad story, told by the shepherd, exhibits images of another cast. The moral is striking, but the tale itself has a

contrary effect to what was expected. Here follows a fine display of wood scenery.

The opening of the second canto is enriched with images of a prime quality. The woodman, at work in the dingle, gives a nice shade to the colours. Gilbert felling the timber, the crash of the tree in falling, the sap draining from the trunk, and the youth tying the faggots, are among the unnumbered beauties of the poem.

The woodman's cottage is a familiar picture; it is, nevertheless, described under circumstances which render it uncommonly interesting. The conversation at supper, and the harmless mirth of the rustics, in which is introduced the shepherd playing the bladder and string, are replete with novelty and entertainment. Gilbert finds here a little relief from his sorrows.

Susan's story, related by the farmer's boy, is in the pathetic style. It is charmingly told, and excites a degree of pity at her untimely fate. Gilbert in the hay-loft proves himself worthy of his friend's confidence; through which, and his ability to resist temptation, he paves the way for his future happiness. The scenery of the farm-yard, the occupation of the farmer, together with the solicitude expressed for Gilbert by the young boy, are the best conceived things I ever met with. I find a neat allegorical apostrophe to cleanliness: I shall insert it.

'Fair CLEANLINESS, sweet-scented lovely maid!
How blest the cottage where thou art display'd!
Good *Health* delights to follow close thy train,
And *Poverty* attempts to frown in vain:
When thou 'midst want set'st out thy charms divine,
Still are we led to fancy plenty thine;
Thy magic touch gives things more value still;
And where thou dwell'st, the more content we feel.'

CANTO V. verse 173.

Gilbert's adventure with the king of the gypsies, and his undertaking to carry a letter for his friend *Herbert*, ultimately crown his felicity. His meeting with his Jenny will be read with interest; and the good advice which Herbert receives on his return home, is worthy the reader's attention.

I would willingly extend my remarks; but for want of talent I must be as concise as possible.

It is allowed, that "Nature is partial in bestowing her gifts;" and we see, with pleasure, an individual rise, through his superior merit, above the herd of mankind. The truth of which observation is well exemplified, by our looking over the works of authors. We perceive many that abound with flashes of genuine wit, and others that are, in every respect, dull and insipid; but we cannot apply the latter case, justly, to the Author of *Gilbert*. He seems well endowed with a lively imagination, and is at no loss to keep up the merits of his personages. He combines every charm we look for in poetry, while his inventive powers are astonishing! His

invention gains in strength, the more we read; until, at last, it forms itself, as it were, into a vast mirror, drawing every thing around within its own proper focus.

He is no mean poet; and it adds not a little to his merit, that he has chosen his heroes from among the lower orders of mankind. It is likely he will meet with some readers ever ready to find fault; but to the admirers of real genius, and lovers of poetic harmony, the poem of *Gilbert* will be a standing dish.

It would require a CAPEL LOFFT to discriminate, fully, its several beauties. I have pointed out a few of them, and must leave it to greater abilities than mine to finish what I have indifferently begun. At the same time, I am far from saying that it has no blemishes; but they are chiefly of a verbal nature, and trivial to those who read more for amusement than to discover errors.

In the following lines I perceive a mistake in the grammatical construction, which rather obscures the sense:

> 'Loud dreary groans his breaking *heart issue.*'
>
> CANTO i. verse 25.

Again,

> 'Say, at thy home, more happy still to be,
> Dwells the good wife, source of felicity;
> With children young thy wishes* *gratified,*
> And gifted blessings crown thy fireside?'
>
> CANTO ii. verse 139.

* See Errata.

In the underneath quotation, the word 'cruel' has a very bad effect. It throws too great a stress on the first foot, or syllable.

'Alas! what signs of madness vex my brain!
My blood no longer burns in every vein:
My senses fled, an outcast lorn I die,
Far from the glance of her disdainful eye:
Yet, *cruel* Jane! one kindly tear bestow;
Drop but one tear in pity to my woe.'

CANTO i. verse 341.

I have taken the liberty, as it will appear, to make a trifling alteration in the third verse. I think it an improvement. There are not many lines throughout the whole piece that will properly admit of it. I believe fewer errors ever escaped any author in a poem of such extent.

As I am now touching on the more discordant parts of the work, I subjoin a letter,* written by a person who appears

---

* "To Mr. G—— E.

"DEAR SIR,

"At your request I have perused the sheets which accompany this letter, and shall give you my opinion of their contents. There cannot be two opinions, indeed, about the matter. The Poem comes with the dignity of an Epic, and is divided, not only into Cantos, but into *Books too*. It is the attempt, at composition in verse, of a farmer's son, who has gotten his education at a Sunday school, and read Bloomfield and nothing else. If, however, the Author had a Capel Lofft to revise, and in many instances to rewrite, his verses,

better able to condemn, than to treat with candour, the light imperfections of an author. I have little occasion to observe to the intelligent reader, that, although it seems to have been written with all the malevolence of a mere critic, it is, nevertheless, too futile in its substance to obtain weight.

"If poetry," says an able writer, "possesses a certain zest and vigour, it will float, one day or other, in spite of ten thousand faults; and if it is not, as sailors term it, sea-worthy, it will sink to rights, though caulked by all the critical carpenters in Europe." But it is my opinion that the present poem will bear a verbal comparison with even the last edition of the *Farmer's Boy;* admitted too, that the one was revised by a CAPEL LOFFT, and the other the unlettered effusions of a farmer's son. The critic, however, errs; for the author of Gilbert is not indeed a farmer's son, but only a young merchant, well known in the commercial world; who studies poetry more with a view to relax the fatigues of a counting-house, than in any expectation to derive pecuniary emolument from it. But the character of an author does not depend so

---

and the project were not somewhat deficient in novelty, he might perhaps have attained as much success as the Author of the Farmer's Boy: but a second Bloomfield is like a second Young Roscius. As it is, his verses are the most incorrect and tasteless things that ever passed the compositor's stick; and if ever the Author of Gilbert makes a blaze in the world, his book must be his fuel. The poem is beneath criticism.

"B——n F——d."

much on what he may happen to be, as on the merits of his labours.

I now hasten to close my account, with little more than some CRITICAL REMARKS concerning GILBERT, written by a gentleman whose sentiments agree more favourably with mine. They contain, besides, an explanation of the MORAL, which, it is intended, should be conveyed. Speaking of the poem, he says:

"I have read it over and over again; and, perhaps, there are not many lines but what I have now by heart, easy to quote upon occasion; the result of which is, that no work I ever met with has afforded me more rational pleasure, or so much amusement; nor do I recollect any other author whom I have studied more, though I read a great many. But what most excites my surprise, is the poet's ingenuity.—He has formed a handsome story of a subject which nobody else has yet attempted in like manner. This is not to be wondered at. It is a scanty field, where few but the author of *Gilbert* would venture to glean.

"The native simplicity of Gilbert often excites my smiles, attempered with pity. I can hardly forbear my compassion, even when it occurs to mind that I before perused the book, and that he is at last made happy.

"The situation of the man at work on the roads I cannot well enter into, never having myself experienced domestic unhappiness. I admire the character of the Woodman. It shows that contentment and industry are the truest sources

of rural felicity—the surest guardians against profligacy and vice.

"NELL and SUSAN are incidents which cannot be too widely circulated: they hold out a most doleful but true picture of the sorrows of female seduction, and the utter ruin of those, who place their implicit confidence in the false oaths of a designing lover.

"JOYCE is a heedless young woman violently bent on the gratification of an illicit passion; but young women, like Joyce, may learn from Gilbert, that there have been more than one *Joseph* in the world, and that no temptation whatever can bring a truly virtuous mind to swerve from the paths of RECTITUDE and HONOUR. Had *Gilbert* complied with her evil wishes, possibly her kindness might have tempted him to remain in her father's family, and thus, not only prevent his saving the life of a fellow creature, but deprive him of the accidental circumstance of finding his Jane, and the consequent happy issue of their meeting.

"From a summary statement of the several characters in this interesting poem, particularly in the case of Nell, Susan, and Gilbert, we may draw this salutary and excellent moral, that sooner or later VIRTUE WILL BE ITS OWN REWARD, AND VICE CARRY WITH ITSELF ITS OWN PUNISHMENT.

"In fine, if *Bloomfield* has received so much applause, who had so wide a scope with his popular subject;

'The fields his study, Nature was his book;

how much more is due to the AUTHOR of Gilbert, who has reared his own superstructure, without any ground, apparently, to build on, or any materials to build with!

"But I should err against truth and my own judgment, were I to say, that it is entirely free from faults. I have not myself pointed out any. I read for pleasure, not to discover errors; and where I find any in Gilbert, I willingly allow that even Milton and Shakspeare are not infallible. Southey is not always perfect, and in *Bloomfield* I can perceive faults without number, yet he had the advantage of a Capel Lofft to revise his book.

"F. J. P."

In course of the poem, there are two or three lines which seem to clash with other writers. I shall quote them here.

Gray, in his Elegy, expresses, that

'Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness in the desert air.'

Compare these in Gilbert:

'Rank nettles, thyme, wood-betony, henbane,
Waste their known virtue and their strength in vain.'

CANTO ii. verse 25.

And in Bloomfield:

> 'Just where the parting boughs' light shadows play.'
>
> *F——'s Boy.*
>
> 'Along the ground the boughs' dark semblance plays.'
>
> GILBERT, canto i. verse 141.

In the latter there appears somewhat of an imitation; yet, on a closer survey, one turns out to be a very imperfect, and the other a true delineation. The whimsical idea of 'light shadows,' reminds me of a learned *Irish* gentleman, who, having arrived from the coast of Africa, ingeniously confessed how he admired the young female blacks; for, said he, they are very fair to look upon! It is the misfortune of the *Farmer's Boy*, that whenever he happens on a good thought, he is almost certain to spoil it, either by some obscurity in his expression, or by his distorting the image. The line ought to stand thus:

> 'Just where the boughs' light airy shadows play.'

We could not, then, mistake its meaning. Again:

> 'Where the kite, brooding, unmolested flies.'
>
> *F——'s Boy.*
>
> 'Where, unmolested, brood the birds of prey.'
>
> GILBERT, canto viii. verse 18.

I took the above for an imitation also: but was glad to discover, that the lines convey two very distinct ideas. The latter is a true picture, taken from nature; and the former, a mere jingle of words. It labours to tell us that the kite, unmolested, *flies brooding:* a sudden flash, that would seem a novelty in the travels of the renowned MUNCHAUSEN.

These are the only collisions throughout the whole poem.

SAMUEL PENIETINE.

London, Jan. 10th, 1809.

To Mr. C——N.

SIR,

Your favour, sent to me on Thursday week, came duly to hand, along with the celebrated poem of GILBERT; I say, indeed, *celebrated,* because we have long admired him, even in his worst clothes (the first edition, foolscap). The improvements which the author has made in the present one, are very deserving of praise,—they give me infinite delight. It is a work which will do him much credit; although, I conceive, it has not yet received the last polish. But with regard to the copy of the letter from a Mr. B——N F——D, are you correct? I have sent it back with my remarks thereon. You say he writes for the *Reviews,* which, however strange it seems, is not improbable. I have frequently met with criticisms not the most correct things in the literary world. His letter

shows but little of the scholar, as you will perceive by some inaccuracies which I have taken the pains to mark out; and, on that head, he must be ill qualified, indeed, to judge of the merits of *Gilbert*. As to what *Anonymous* says of this author having copied from Bloomfield, it is impossible! No writer, especially of poetry, could, I am confident, derive any help or satisfaction in so doing: which I shall endeavour to explain; not only to vindicate a favourite bard, but to snatch a little of the misplaced wreath from the brow of the *F——r's Boy*: a leaf or two, surely, should belong to *Gilbert*.

It has been with me an established rule, never to trust to another person's opinion concerning the merits of a BOOK; but to think for myself; and, according to what amusement or instruction I find, I raise the author in my own estimation. A poet who undertakes to copy NATURE, should first make himself well acquainted with the true meaning and order of words; for, without it, it is not likely he can express his ideas in that purity of style so essential to a good writer. Do we not, very justly, find fault with the false colouring of a picture if the objects appear distorted? And in poetry, as well as in painting, due care should be held to represent the images accurately. Were the *Farmer's Boy* once stript of his gaudy trappings, (the *preface*, &c.) and the reader not afraid to trust to his own discernment, keeping in view as much of the author's design as he may be able to collect, he will soon discover the most contradictory blemishes, ignorant mistakes,

and tautologies, that ever escaped any writer whatever; saying nothing of the light hops and skips, like a grasshopper, over the wide field of nature.

I have neither time, nor inclination, at present, to enter fully into an elaborate discussion of a subject so trifling. I shall be as brief as possible. The blunders of this author commence with his title-page, and end only with his book. With respect to the title-page, I suppose it is meant to give a summary statement of the work. THOMSON judiciously divides his poem into four distinct parts; Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter; but why the *occupation* of a farmer's boy is divided *into the four seasons of the year*, is hard to unriddle.

In speaking of *Giles*, the poet introduces him as one inured to hard labour:

> 'Labour his portion,——
> His life was, constant, cheerful servitude:'

Yet, in the next line save one, it follows,

> 'The fields his study, nature was his book:'

which conveys an idea totally irreconcilable to the former assertion; since the study of nature, in her full variety, we must all allow, is ever incompatible with a life of ac-

tual drudgery: besides, while speaking of the farmer, he adds;

> 'Unceasing industry he kept in view;
> And never lack'd a job for Giles to do.'

The boy must, therefore, either wilfully neglect his master's business, or otherwise give up his favourite pursuits; which, in the very outline of the work, is a strange contradiction, that will, at one time or other, manifest itself to the meanest capacity. But, at the commencement of the third book, the author himself bids farewell to his hero. He is now in a glowing heat with *Thomsonic* fire, and exclaims—

> 'The years decline,
> The thundering *chase*, &c.
> Invite my song!'

after premising, in the beginning of his poem, only to sing of him,

> 'Whose drudgery unheeded goes.'

Not so is the portraiture of Gilbert. It is finely drawn, and is never perceived to depart from its native simplicity. The same point holds good with all the other personages in this inestimable poem; but the character of Giles is expressed very differently indeed. He is represented as one industri-

ous, idle, bold, sheepish; a common butt for every clod-pole to crack his jokes upon; a mere novice; and, lastly, a great philosopher.

It is impossible to admit such idle metaphors as the following, with our ideas of the elegant and classical compositions of THEOCRITUS, with whose works the *F——'s Boy* is said to rank! viz. *breath* itself *stands still;* the slumbering *plows*, the friendly *horn*, the friendly *shore*, the friendly *telescope*, breathless *rooms*, smokes and steams,* nature's *charms* that *stamps*, wield thy *shotless gun*, &c. or what sense or meaning do we find in such lines as these—

'Still 'midst huge clods he plunges *on* forlorn,
That *laugh*,' &c.?

Or,

'Every molehill is a bed of thyme!'

The former, who can understand it? and, of the latter, it is a riddle that would utterly disgrace a toy-book for children. The best of his images, or those which are held out to possess the highest degree of excellence, are badly finished. In many instances the sense is sacrificed to gingle the rhyme, and in others the rhyme is totally disregarded:

'The splendid *raiment* of the earth *peeps* forth.'

---

* It is very improper style to write 'smokes and steams,' &c. we might as well say a bag of shots, a bag of sands, a load of coals, chickens, &c. which are aggregate nouns, and admit not the plural termination.

In which the beauty of the image is destroyed, and the sense utterly lost, merely to chime with the ending of the word *north*. Again,

> ‘ Advancing SPRING profusely spreads abroad
> Flowers of all hues, with sweetest fragrance *stor'd;*
> Where'er she treads, LOVE gladdens every plain,
> *Delight*, on tip-toe, bears her lucid train;
> Sweet *Hope* with conscious brow before her flies,
> Anticipating wealth from summer skies;
> All Nature feels her renovating sway;
> The sheep-fed pasture, and the meadow gay;
> And trees, and shrubs, no longer budding seen,
> Display the new-grown branch of lighter green.’

Fine as this assemblage of allegorical figures is said to be, the idea of ‘ delight on tip-toe’ completely spoils it. To walk on the tip of the toe, is a movement very unlikely to give delight. And should we picture the image in the attitude of dancing, it seems still more ridiculous; for she is described in the act of bearing another's train.

But, if *Delight* actually *bears* the lucid habiliments of *Spring*, it is no wonder that ‘ LOVE gladdens every *plain*’ on beholding a naked goddess so intently employed. Far from there being any particular beauty or merit discernible in these quoted verses, the poet evidently wishes to pass the matter quick as possible. Advancing SPRING moves with too great

a degree of haste to be otherwise than servile. She has even consigned over her dress to accelerate her motions, and tosses the flowers *abroad*, and at home too, with an inconceivable rapidity.

Connoisseurs in painting, examine into the merits of a piece by its natural analogy and colour, supposing the objects as seen through a meniscus-glass. It would be very wrong for a painter, who meant to sketch a *Venus*, to represent her toothless, or her skin in wrinkles; hence it is evident, that whatever painting *is* to the sight, poetry should *be* to the mind. A word misplaced, or wrongly applied, may injure a picture formed by the imagination, as much as the lack of an eye or a hand would spoil the symmetry of a figure painted on canvass. Had the poet left out the misnomer, 'tip-toe,' and modulated the personified figure *Delight*, so as to have ended the verse thus,

'bears up her lucid train,'

it would not only have read much better, but stood more consonantly true with grammar and sense.

A tasteless author will sometimes stumble on a good thought, which, if it were properly managed, might cover a hundred of his faults; but, unfortunately, he hammers it out like leaf-gold, till it becomes of little value. An example of which is seen in the former passage. The first image of 'advancing SPRING,' is carried out to its full extent, by '*De-*

light on tip-toe:' it is disabled at the fifth line, with 'Sweet *Hope* anticipating wealth;' recovers a little in the seventh, where 'All Nature feels,' &c. and then it suddenly disappears. When an image is broken, or the idea imperfect, it should be struck off with a dash thus——or a full point. It is not in the power of the *comma* or the *semicolon*, or any device whatever, to join a figure after it is divided, as at the end of this concluding line;

'All Nature feels her renovating sway;'

The next verse is the head of another distinct subject:

'The sheep-*fed* pasture, and the meadow gay.'

Then follows another—

'And trees and shrubs, no longer budding seen,
Display the *new*-grown branch of lighter green.'

I notice the above, because it is of infinite importance. The semicolon at the end of the former line, renovating sway; confines 'All Nature to the sheep-*fed* pasture,' &c. which seems absurd. The term itself of sheep-*fed* is objectionable. It conveys no portion of sense. The same remark will apply nearly to the word (if word it can be called) of *new*-grown. It does not only cause a labouring, but it is extremely harsh,

and *bitter* to the understanding. I presume, however, it might be rendered admissibly into 'full-grown:' but the former I shall leave to abler commentators.

However, I will befriend the poet, and, for once, re-write the foregoing, as they are set apart for some of his best verses. I expect his thanks—it may be of use to him in future.

> 'Profusely, SPRING advancing, scatters wide
> Flowers of all hues, with fragrant sweets supplied;
> Where'er she treads, a beauteous scene appears,
> Each tree, each plant, her verdant liv'ry wears;
> Gaily *Delight* bears up her lucid train;
> Kind thoughts inspire each rural nymph and swain,
> And LOVE keeps holiday upon the plain.
> Glad *Hope* before, on lifted pinion flies,
> Sanguine of blessings from the milder skies;
> Unnumber'd *joys* attend, to crown her way;
> All Nature feels her renovating sway.

The numerous mistakes, &c. in the *Farmer's Boy*, are, very likely, owing to the poet's unprecedented *cruelty*, which led him to gulp his own poor Muse at the opening of his work, like the avaricious man, who, as ÆSOP relates the story, destroyed a fowl that laid him golden eggs. He says;

> 'O come, blest spirit! whatsoe'er thou art;
> Thou kindling warmth,' &c.

After which invitation he exclaims:

'Sweet *inmate*, hail!'

Fully demonstrative of the action and effect.

Whether or not these remarks will be looked upon as invidious, I cannot determine. To discuss the merits of a work according to the best of our capacity, is a privilege which we are still allowed. We have it along with the book for our money. How few make use of this privilege! They will sooner go with the stream of popular opinion; never thinking how, or where, that opinion might originate. This is a truth, indeed. One will cry—'I have seen a volume which I think charming—it amused me so much, that I would learn how it was received by the critics!'—'Why, as for that,' cries another, 'they *bona fide* condemned it.'—'Indeed!' says the first, 'then my own judgment must have erred! I will return it immediately to the publishers.'—'Here,' cries a third, 'is a truly divine poem! I really *do not understand it myself*, but am informed it has a rapid sale. It comes well recommended, which is enough for me.'

To conclude a subject dissonant to every principle of liberality, I will again aver my decided opinion to be, that the Author of *Gilbert* neither did, nor could have copied his characteristic poem from Bloomfield's *Farmer's Boy*. An imitation must always fall short of the original; and to compare both these works together, we might as well contrast the

feeble beams of the moon to the dazzling rays of the sun.—GILBERT is the work, apparently, of a GREAT POET in his infancy, (one whom we should do well to encourage); and the *F——'s B—y*, the clumsy labour of a *new*-grown poetaster. And thus much for the substance of the learned Mr. F——d's criticism.

MILES SAPMAN.

January 13th, 1809.

TO THE AUTHOR OF GILBERT.

AN ACROSTIC, WRITTEN EXTEMPORE, BY A FRIEND.

INGENIOUS bard! permit a humble muse,
Admiring GILBERT, to unfold his views:
May he make known the pleasure which he took,
Endeavouring to explore the beauties of thy book?
So full of *gems*, its worth none can o'erlook.
Time shall increase the lustre of thy fame,
Evolving ages speak thy deathless name:
Malice distort her wrinkled brow in vain,
Proclaim her hatred of the rural strain:
Loud *eulogies* attend thy peaceful way,
Entwining fair the laurel and the bay.
Merit like thine shall meet its due reward,
And men of taste evince their just regard;
Nor shall thine enemies the rightful meed retard.

INTRODUCTORY VERSES.

BY THE AUTHOR.

Go, honest Gilbert, pride of swains,
Go, well rewarded for your pains
  In all you hold most dear:
Jenny your fond esteem regards;
Kind fortune showers on you rewards
  Fate is no more severe.

Blest with contentment sweet at home,
O'er hills and dales no more you'll roam,
  Low bending by despair;
But every trouble flies at last,
Gay pleasure crowns all sorrows past,
  And banishes dull care.

Go, lowly Gilbert, tender youth,
Rewarded in your love and truth,
  Example to set forth;
Long shall your history be read,
Till lasting fame exalted spread
  Your honour, merit, worth.

And while 'tis NATURE tempts the lyre,
The song of *Gilbert* shall aspire
  The rural tribe to charm;
His artless, unaffected lore,
Th' unletter'd rustic will explore,
  And in his cause grow warm.

What tho' the critics may despise
A moral in a mean disguise,
  The Muse will still befriend,
Still aid the rough, untutor'd wight,
Smooth flowing language to indite,
  Which Art would fain amend!

Nor the learn'd exercise of schools,
Nor the stiff pedantry of rules,
  Awake in splendid fame,
More high than where those *rules* can reach
From Nature's book, which angels teach
  To bards who catch the flame:

Thus silver ore is brought to glow,
Till loose from dross, it runs below,
  A purify'd, clear stream.
Fair Emulation! spread thy fires,
Refine whate'er the Muse inspires,
  And dignify the theme.

DIRECTIONS TO THE BINDER

FOR PLACING THE PLATES.

Map of the Country where Gilbert wanders, to front....page 3
The Husbandman and Family.....31
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Gilbert reclining on a bank by the road side.....97

ERRATA AND CORRIGENDA.

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4	14	*for* on his lone journey hies *read* between the trees he hies
12	9	— To *read* At
22	11	— lost outcast forlorn *read* gone an outcast lorn
32	11	— barren *read* fallow'd
35	7	— thy wishes *read* are thy hopes
37	7	— to *read* in
ib.	12	— the *read* a
40	10	— the *read* some
43	18	— seldomer *read* seldom me
50	1	— that *read* the
56	9	— Lo! he'll *read* He will
57	10	*for* Lo! *read* Deep
ib.	11	— the *read* his
ib.	16	— Ne'er look'd *read* Never smil'd
59	10	— Lo! *read* And
64	5	— BLOOMFIELD *read* SHAKSPEARE
67	3	— Lo! *read* Sure
73	16	— Lo! *read* When
76	17	— as *read* here
78	6	— goodly *read* amorous
88	2	— blame *read* fault
97	11	— with poplar *read* and poplars
104	1	— I *read* he
116	6	— we *read* me.

GILBERT.

BOOK I.

CANTO I.

ARGUMENT.

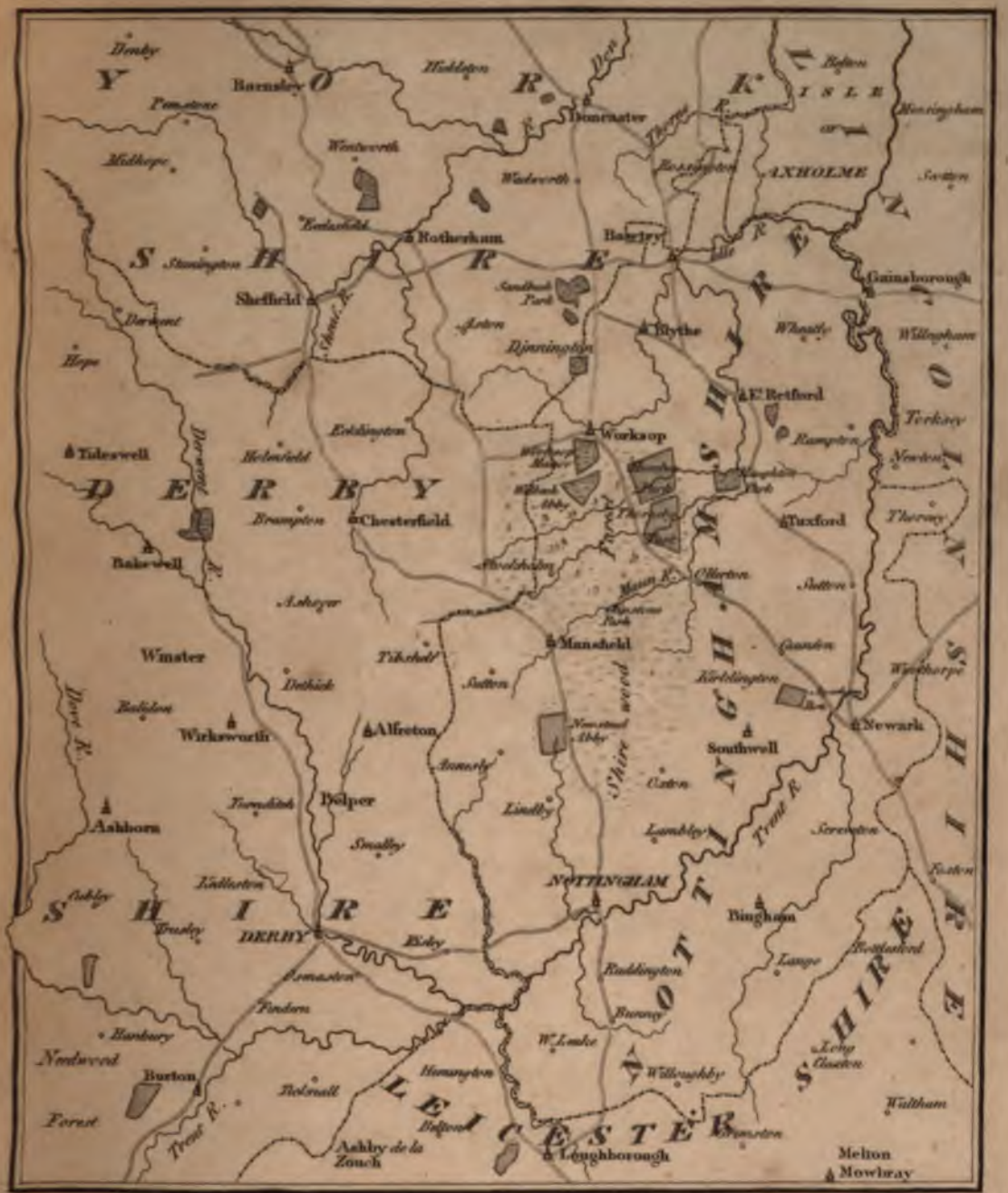
Invocation. The subject proposed. Gilbert wanders abroad in the fields; meets with a labourer at work on the highway; enters into conversation. The shepherd's boy, &c. Story of proud Nelly. Moonlight, &c. A sudden storm. Gilbert takes shelter in a wood—is lost. The nightingale. Morning, &c. Advice to Gilbert.

TIME. Two days are employed in this book.

CANTO I.

COME, fav'ring Power! to whom belongs the lyre,
Strike softer music, and the song inspire.
Immortal deeds heroic verse records,
And clangous WAR proud Triumphs still affords;
Her hot Sea-Fights, while dreadful guns loud roar,
Vent fire and smoke, and shake the rattling shore:
I sing of NATURE, and a LOVER's pains;
Woods, rivers, rocks, and fields, excite my humbler strains.

Say, Muse! the cause made GILBERT sore distress'd,
Or rack'd with pangs his agonizing breast;
Constrain'd the youth o'er hills and dales to roam,
Far from his friends, his kindred, and his home?
Fair JANE the MAID refus'd his vows to hear,
And set at nought his love, his truth sincere.
At early dawn he walks the lonely fields,
A little pleasure change of objects yields;
His cheerless food from hedge to hedge he seeks,
His morning's fast with nuts or sloes he breaks.
High on each branch the crab-tree clusters grow,
He aims a stone, the fruit rebounds below;
He quickly gathers up the scatter'd prize,
And o'er the stile on his lone journey hies.
Sometimes to right, sometimes to left he goes,
Bemoans his lot—his gesture marks his woes:
Loud dreary groans his breaking heart issue,
And tears, fast trickling, his pale cheeks bedew.


YORKSHIRE
Barnsley
Doncaster
Rotherham
Sheffield
Wakefield
Pontefract
Tadcaster
Selby
Howden
Goole
Gainsborough
Thorne
Snaith
Pontefract
Knottingley
Ferrybridge
Castleford
Wakefield
Dewsbury
Huddersfield
Halifax
Bradford
Keighley
Skipton
Ripon
Boroughbridge
Knaresborough
Harrogate
Ripon
Thirsk
Northallerton
Richmond
Leyburn
Middleham
Hawes
Sedbergh
Kirkby Lonsdale
Settle
Ingleton
Clapham
Giggleswick
Malham
Gargrave
Skipton
Otley
Ilkley
Keighley
Haworth
Bradford
Halifax
Huddersfield
Penistone
Holmfirth
Meltham
Saddleworth
Oldham
Rochdale
Todmorden
Burnley
Colne
Barnoldswick
Clitheroe
Whalley
Blackburn
Ribchester
Preston
Garstang
Lancaster
Kirkby Lonsdale
Sedbergh
Dent
Ingleton
Hawes
Reeth
Richmond
Catterick
Bedale
Masham
Ripon
Boroughbridge
Wetherby
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Selby
Howden
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Thorne
Doncaster
Bawtry
Tickhill
Retford
Gainsborough
Lincoln
Newark
Southwell
Mansfield
Worksop
Tuxford
Sutton
Kirkby
Ollerton
Edwinstowe
Clumber Park
Welbeck Abbey
Thoresby
Rufford Abbey
Newstead Abbey
Hucknall
Nottingham
Trent R.
Derwent R.
Derby
Chesterfield
Alfreton
Belper
Ashbourne
Matlock
Bakewell
Tideswell
Buxton
Castleton
Hope
Edale
Glossop
Stockport
Macclesfield
Congleton
Sandbach
Middlewich
Northwich
Nantwich
Crewe
Alsager
Leek
Cheadle
Uttoxeter
Burton
Tutbury
Rolleston
Derby
Ashby de la Zouch
Loughborough
Melton Mowbray
Oakham
Uppingham
Stamford
Grantham
Sleaford
Boston
Spalding
Holbeach
Wisbech
Peterborough
Market Deeping
Bourne
Folkingham
Sleaford
Lincoln
Gainsborough
Epworth
Crowle
Thorne
Doncaster
Barnsley
Wakefield
Pontefract
Castleford
Ferrybridge
Knottingley

BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA

A labouring man beholds our gentle wight,
And begs to know how came he in such plight;
Young Gilbert hears the query meant for kind,
Returns short answer, brief unfolds his mind:
Confess'd that luckless love infix'd the dart,
Which caus'd fresh pain to fester in his heart!
Compassion, then, the curious hind express'd,
Fetch'd a deep sigh, and thus the youth address'd:
" Unhappy stranger, list to my sad tale,
" And let my words to sooth your grief avail:
" Would I were single, like as you are now,
" No anxious cares should e'er affect my brow;
" Gay Pleasure o'er my joyous hours should tend,
" Crowning my bliss with ale, a pipe, a friend.
" Such bliss I knew; but, still dissatisfied,
" I courted *Ruth*, ah me! and wedlock tried:
" Simple, indeed, to sacrifice my peace,
" And for a wife exchange regretted ease!

" When crows the cock th' unwelcome dawn of day,
" O! I must speed the summons to obey;
" Compell'd, through poverty, to quit my rest,
" And leave my bed with silent grief opprest.
" The food I eat a bare existence yields;
" Fate frowns on me, care all her wants reveals:
" These, these, are mine——I vainly do lament
" The hapless hour I barter'd my content.
" Near the road-side are stony fragments laid,
" To mend the ruts by loaded waggons made;
" The splinter'd lumps I in the hollows spread,
" And throw the gravel where the horses tread.
" Such toil is hard: alas! my strength I prove;
" Down runs my sweat, and heavily I move;
" While not one drop of home-brew'd ale I taste,
" To cheer my sinking spirits, weakly brac'd:
" Ah! sir, a wife, two infant children small,
" Whate'er I earn, they're ready for it all!

" A single doit no more my wage affords,
" A penny spent excites provoking words!
" Go now, bethink, I envy such as you,
" Free to act fair, and best what pleases do:
" Would I were single; or might choose once more,
" I'd have no wife—but I in vain deplore."

This Gilbert heard: his varying look bespeaks
A mind perplex'd, and thus he silence breaks:
" Well-taught experience makes us all grow wise;
" Each for himself the doubtful matter tries.
" My stubborn passion I would gladly close,
" Set right my thoughts, and banish all my woes;
" From hateful strife I'd keep my temper free,
" Were lovely Jenny wedded but to me.
" Were she, were *Jane* become my constant bride,
" How rich the gift!——I'd nothing crave beside:
" Able to work, industry I'd embrace,
" With sweet contentment smiling on my face."

" Were I a king, my power I'd soon resign,
" Wealth, splendour, pomp, to call dear Jenny mine;
" Some lowland cot, enrich'd, adorn'd with her,
" I'd to whole streets of palaces prefer!
" But, ah! I'm doom'd to meet the fair one's scorn,
" And wander here a vagabond forlorn;
" Poor, destitute, forsaken, bending still
" 'Neath weighty anguish and o'erpow'ring ill."
To whom the other coldly thus replies;
" Youth! you spoke well, experience makes us wise:
" Conjecturing false, a wife I did obtain,
" Felicity and happiness to gain:
" Alas! alas! three weeks were hardly gone,
" When, ev'ry day, provoking strife came on;
" Or wrath severe——my money I'd all spent,
" And caus'd our misery,—our discontent.
" Truly the saying fresh occurr'd to mind,
" When wealth is fled, love lingers not behind!

" Regret and sorrow by *one* act I date;
" A foolish act, which I repent too late."
He spoke: our swain gives vent a piteous sigh,
The tear, big-swelling, wets his glistening eye;
He bids abruptly the poor hind adieu,
Far on the road his journey to pursue.
Depress'd, forlorn, near *Tideswell* town he goes,
Explores the wondrous spring that ebbs and flows;
Or, this side hast'ning, climbs the heavy hill,
Descends the slope, and comes into the dell:
Some time he stands his sufferings to bewail,
Near the wild fig-trees in the dismal vale,
Where sundry elms obstruct the lightning's beam,
Save, oft, the wither'd branch admits a gleam;
Or where the mountain towers its lofty head,
He walks below, hard by the colonnade,
Which, strung with flow'rs in wreaths, love-knots and darts,
Bears nigh resemblance to the sculptile arts.

Like one who fear'd a snake amidst the grass,
Strives Gilbert 'neath the fig-trees' boughs to pass;
Disturbs the blinking screech-owl——loud it screams
A hideous sound——the vale more horrid seems.
Through the entangled covert breaking way,
Our weary wanderer hails the sun's bright ray;
Views the rough steep, whose brow salutes the sky;
Or loiters where the tomb-stone meets the eye;
Its chequer'd marble, smoothly wrought, stands fair,
The work of time and persevering care;
With bleeding hearts supports the fluted urn,
While little Cupid ever seems to mourn;
What meant these things young *Gilbert* sought to know;
And stooping down, intently look'd below;
He, on the pedestal, some lines survey'd,
Sacred to memory of a beauteous maid:
And here, for meditation well design'd,
Nature's own works engross the studious mind,

A solemn spot to bless the anchorite,
And bear his thoughts in ecstatic delight.
But though deep solitude influence still
Th' expanded soul to sooth each troubling ill,
Young *Gilbert* ponders o'er his slighted pain,
And cheerless, sighing, hastes across the plain.
Along the ground the boughs' dark semblance plays;
Down airy paths he turns his mournful gaze:
A course uncertain in the fields he bends,
Towards where DERWENT's gliding wave extends;
Onward he travels, melancholy, slow.
A shepherd's boy essays his grief to know:
An answer kind lorn *Gilbert* ne'er denies,
He tells th' inquiring rustic why he sighs:
" Ah me! with scorn fair *Jane* my love requites,
" Wounds deep my breast, and cruel pangs excites;
" A stubborn passion makes my tears to flow,
" Distracts my senses, brings my spirits low.

" Far live my friends, I've from my kindred ran,
" In all respects a miserable man!
" The length'ning wilds with weary steps I tread;
" My flatt'ring hopes and happiness are fled.
" No situation long allures my stay;
" I wander, heedless where I shape my way:
" A change of place affords a small relief,
" Variety's my best solace in grief."

To which the boy assum'd a friendly look,
A smile o'erhung his visage while he spoke:
" How much I feel for your untoward plight!
" And if I can, I'll set the matter right.
" Your scornful Jane is worthy of all blame,
" Another *Nell*—I'll warrant her the same:
" That village-tyrant humbled, yonder lies,
" Nor more to wound her lovers by surprise;
" No more those side-long glances cause despair,
" No more young Cupid wantons in her hair;

" Her prideful days are fled—for ever past;
" By her own weapons she's o'erthrown at last!
" Long time a ploughman, *Edwin* was his name,
" Tried every art to win the beauteous dame;
" Neglected, scorn'd, he pin'd for NELL the PROUD,
" Who oft express'd her sentiments aloud:"
' Stripling! forbear; your suit I'll still deny;
' Think you in time, nor place your heart so high:
' A simple cotter surely charms not me,
' Nor covet I to wed the like of thee!
' Go now, accost some milk-maid, ruddy fair;
' Implore the like to pity your despair:
' 'Tis not for NELL your prayers or groans to heed;
' Hence unregarded, from my presence speed!'
" Such haughty words came *Edwin* oft to hear,
" When, led by love, he met her look severe;
" Till, all at once, distraction seiz'd his mind,
" And for a time—poor youth! he was confin'd.

" Meanwhile the soldiers to our village came,
" To hire the service of the swains their aim;
" Some red-coat serjeant made weak *Nell* his prize,
" Destroy'd her virtue—then commenc'd her sighs.
" Vexatious strife her manner soon betray'd;
" Her ruin'd state with horror she survey'd:
" Fall'n were her hopes, her pride all done away;
" How she repin'd!—to gloomy thoughts a prey.
" Th' unhappy girl a mother soon became;
" By which, ah me! increas'd her open shame:
" Life grew too burdensome for her to bear;
" She poison took, and bade farewell to care.
" Near yonder barn four different roads are seen,
" There lies the wretch of suicide between.
" Long time did many intercession make,
" To save the body from the driving stake:
" A dreadful fate!—deserv'dly it befell
" The needless pride of our aspiring *Nell.*

" Her slighted lover mourn'd her dire disgrace;
" He midst the rocks a marble stone did place.
" Now then, young man, suspend your fruitless grief;
" Let what I've told afford you full relief:
" Who knows but she who treats you thus unkind,
" May fall decoy'd, and punishment soon find."
He ceas'd. Poor *Gilbert* to reply disdains;
Renews his journey o'er the dusky plains:
He lov'd his *Jane*—perceiv'd, though friendly spoke,
The shepherd's words his anger did provoke.
The sun now sunk, the ling'ring light fast fled;
Across the fields his quicker steps he sped.
He feels arise new pangs to vex his soul;
Down his pale cheeks his tears incessant roll.
Clear shines the moon—spread far, her lucid beam
Reflects more bright the DERWENT'S silv'ry stream:
GILBERT beholds, and, guided by the ray,
Shapes farther south his solitary way.

Lo! while he walks, he seems still more oppress'd;
He smites in agony his lab'ring breast;
Groan follows groan, and sigh succeeds to sigh,
Loud his complaints resound the cloudless sky.
" How hard I'm doom'd!—how great the woes I feel!
" Beyond the powers of language to reveal.
" Fair *Jenny's* slights affect my sinking heart;
" Beneath the lash of studied scorn I smart.
" Ah me! what languor steals o'er every vein,
" Hope comes no more to cheer a hapless swain:
" Sure I'm as weak as *Jenny's* comely fair;
" Her form, her image, haunt me every where.
" Blow, blow, ye winds! blow yet more bleak and cold!
" My cause for sorrow I will hence unfold.
" Oh! for some lonely cavern 'midst the bourn,
" Where answering *Echo* still delights to mourn!
" I'll try no more a prude's esteem to gain,
" Who loves to frown, and cruel e'er remain."

Thus loud complaining on his way he goes;
The wind is up, it shakes the rustling boughs;
Fast from the clouds a sudden shower descends;
Full many a shrub o'ercharg'd with water bends:
Big hail comes rattling 'side the neighb'ring hills,
Strikes the tree tops, falls plunging the clear rills;
In clay-moist earth the dashing stream divides,
Sweeps rough the soil, or down the quarries glides
With hideous roar, till the strong current's force
Impetuous, laves below the rocks its course.
GILBERT to shelter hastens o'er the sands,
Aside a row of rev'rend elms he stands,
Whose tow'ring branches thicker darkness crown,
While shiver'd leaves and splinters fall adown.
Lone in the wood's deep solitude he's come,
With weary step, unmindful of the gloom;
Disturbs the snakes, coil'd up in various folds,
Alarms the frogs, and wakes the blinking owls.

High o'er his head the croaking crows suspend
Their clapping wings; they on their young attend;
Their nestling young beneath their care repose,
Fear not the noise, or heed the wav'ring boughs.
Like some struck wretch, unseen abroad at noon,
Wanders at night, low muttering to the moon;
Or in wild accent dirges dire will sing,
Making the woodlands and the vallies ring,
Poor Gilbert walks—'tis peace he vainly seeks;
Oft, incoherent, to himself he speaks;
Calls on some Power to mark how he's oppress'd,
Jane scorn'd his love, and sorely him distress'd:
What sense directs by troubling thoughts he foils,
And heavy grief rewards his careful toils;
Sweet hope of joy forsakes his pensive mind,
No glimpse is left—he thinks his fate unkind.
Again he strives to pass between the trees;
Their hollow trunks repel the whistling breeze:

A horrid gloom involves the wood profound,
And night's foul *bird* screams frightfully around:
Lo! where he goes the track is more o'ercast,
The mournful youth bewilder'd stands at last;
Vexatious tears wet either swollen eye,
And his warm breast heaves many a lab'ring sigh.
Cold blows the blast: he mends his weary pace,
Hies through the thorns, and finds the lonely place,
Where still are laid fell'd trunks of sturdy oaks,
Fell'd by the woodman's close-repeated strokes;
And nigh at hand, erected on the glade,
Stood a small hut, of sapless branches made;
The driven stake rough set the plot of ground,
And interwoven hung the boughs around.
That *Gilbert* view'd, and much desir'd to know
How he should act the best, or stay or go;
To seek the fields, continue to lament,
Or 'midst a hovel cease his useless plaint.

Farther he went apart the cheerless cot,
Retrac'd his steps, forsook the lonely spot,
Fully resolv'd 'twere better to return;
Nor longer in the thicket stay forlorn.
The moon withdrawn: another course he takes;
He hears the wind—the oak's strong branch it shakes:
He madly comes to tempt the dangerous gloom,
To close his grief, and finish his sad doom:
Soon in the windings of the rustling maze,
His courage lessens:—grimly death essays,
In threat'ning form, to prove his final fate,
Freeing his mind from its affliction's weight.
What time among the bushes *Gilbert*'s vex'd,
Far more bewilder'd, and still more perplex'd;
The *nightingale*, sweet bird! begins her strain,
Soothing the powerful anguish of his pain;
New life, new thoughts, accompany her song,
And glad ideas by the theme prolong:—

Ah me! 'tis ceas'd.—Now high a tree he scales,
There sits till morn illumes the dusky vales.
" Sweet warbler, hail!" the list'ner station'd, cries,
" Why cease your strains, that charm away my sighs?
" Come, welcome sleep! cause me a little rest,
" A little ease for my impassion'd breast;
" So when day breaks I'll tempt my fate no more,
" But wind the circuit which I've wound before."
He ceas'd. The dismal shades of night soon fled;
AURORA ting'd the sky with streaks of red;
A thousand chirping songsters of the grove,
Awake the swain to feel fresh pangs of love:
His *Jenny's* comely figure, and her scorn,
Dwell in his thoughts; he's more and more forlorn;
The busy world to him a chaos seems,
His love sincere, frustrated is he deems.
" Gilbert! afflict no more your pensive mind,
" Nor mourn for one who treats you so unkind;

" But set at nought the pow'r of those fine eyes,
" Lest your sense fall a hopeless sacrifice."
Methinks I hear our lover loud exclaim,
" Go, gentle bard! nor seek my faults to blame;
" Beauty divine unfolds her awful charms,
" Distracts my breast with violent alarms;
" Exerts her power, to waft the dang'rous storm,
" Destroys my peace, enchains me to *that* form.
" Alas! what signs of madness vex my brain!
" My blood no longer burns in ev'ry vein:
" My senses lost, outcast, forlorn I die,
" Far from the glance of her disdainful eye:
" Yet, cruel Jane! one kindly tear bestow;
" Drop but one tear in sorrow for my woe."
" Unhappy Gilbert! cease this doleful strain,
" Curb the wild thoughts that cause your inward pain;
" Love's hapless flame with troubles still dismays,
" And wrongly balances ere judgment weighs.

" Then not vain charms should your affection bind,
" Since these may hide the coarse, the vulgar mind;
" Beneath a modest guise, and plainer face,
" May dwell the soul bedeck'd with every grace,
" Meet to bestow, in exquisite degree,
" Domestic bliss, supreme felicity."

GILBERT.

BOOK I.

CANTO II.

CANTO II.

NOW shines the sun—enliv'ning are his beams;
Now ev'ry leaf a sparkling treasure seems;
The dew-drops hang, reflecting various dyes,
Ting'd like the rainbow's colours 'midst the skies;
And now the woodman's measur'd strokes repeat,
Spread by the busy Echo loud to beat.
Adown the oak our wanderer fast descends,
Towards the spot his eager steps he bends:

Beneath the trees, o'ershadowing with their boughs,
Through many a mazy labyrinth he goes;
Views the green laurel rip'ning o'er his head,
Clusters of fruit like cherries tempting red;
Rife mistletoe, which bears the pulp milk-white;
And ivy, cank'ring to its fatal height.
With ling'ring pace, by little he proceeds;
Now in the dingle's cavity he speeds;
Explores his way 'tween many an hazel bough,
And scatters nuts of glossy brown below.
Full oft the squirrels from the grove rebound,
Rustling the dry leaves falling on the ground;
The nimble dormice seek the desert pass,
Steal quick along, or hide beneath the grass:
Aside their holds, where tangled brambles grow,
Near the rough blackthorn, and the cruder sloe,
Rank nettles, thyme, wood-betony, henbane,
Waste their known virtue and their strength in vain.

But now our *Gilbert* comes within the spot,
Where overnight he'd seen the branch-form'd cot:
He shouts amain:——the wond'ring woodman hears,
And is confounded by unusual fears:
Behind the wall, in thoughtful mood, he stands,
Holding his axe within his trembling hands—
Finds out a crevice, marks the vent'rous swain,
Perceives his stupor and his fright are vain.
The woodman cries, " My son, what brings you here?
" Tell me your name, whence come, and who you are?
" Sure in the wood there's nothing fit to find,
" Fit for a youth to please his active mind:
" The nuts are wet with night's returning dew,
" The crabs unripe are sure no prize to you:
" Confess for why you leave your distant home,
" Far in the wilds, at peep of day, to roam.
" 'Tis seen some grief affects your early fire,
" Dulls every look, bespeaks affliction dire:

" I feel concern'd—I wish the cause to hear,
" Nor of my friendship have you need to fear."
To whom the youth replies, as frankly free,
" Soon I'll inform you, sir, concerning me.
" My name is *Gilbert*, o'er the wilds I rove,
" A wight oppress'd by unsuccessful love.
" From Bawtry town with weary steps I came,
" Strange to these parts, no home have I to claim:
" For three long months I've like a vagrant pass'd
" From place to place, and here I come at last.
" Ah me! I ventur'd into solitude,
" To mourn my slighted passion for a prude!
" Cruel infatuation!—I adore
" A giddy maid, who hates me more and more!
" With grief of soul my brain it stupifies,
" My panting bosom heaves incessant sighs.
" I've bade adieu to *Jane's* disdainful scorn,
" Leaving my friends, disconsolate, forlorn,

GILBERT.

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" Hoping through change of place some ease to find,
" Haply some ease for my disorder'd mind.
" And while I walk'd o'erborne with sad dismay,
" A countryman o'ertook me on my way,
" Ask'd what I was? what ail'd me? whence I came?
" Or wanting work? I answer'd him the same.
" Then, as I wish'd, he presently agreed
" To hire my help—his boy I did succeed:
" He good instruction did on me bestow,
" And still my labour valued not too low.
" A straw-roof'd cottage on the moor he own'd,
" A thriving hedge extended far around;
" Choice shrubs and trees, with various blossoms spread,
" O'er flowers and plants, grac'd many a cultur'd bed.
" Blest with a wife industrious and fair,
" A ruddy offspring claim'd his anxious care:
" When clos'd at eve his labours in the field,
" Sweet rapture their lov'd intercourse would yield:

" Fix'd by his spouse, his children on his knees,
" Near his fire-side—what luxury of ease!
" On his rough stand he'd place the sparkling ale,
" And joke and laugh, or tell some pleasing tale.
" When I approach'd, the little rustics fled,
" Scar'd at a stranger—nothing yet they said:
" Familiar grown, no more my sight they fear'd;
" Still, when they play'd, sweet innocence appear'd.
" Here taught to break the glebe, the dung to throw,
" I've from the heap o'erspread the same below;
" Enrich'd with nutriment the barren soil,
" That better crops might crown the ploughman's toil.
" When sultry heats have parch'd the stubbled earth,
" Dried up the grain, and threaten'd certain dearth,
" I've borne the bucket from the neighb'ring rill,
" The garden troughs and watering-pots to fill.
" At times have I, with artificial showers,
" Reviv'd the plants, the herbs, and drooping flowers;

" Propt firm the weaker, pluckt the useless weed,
" And crush'd the vermin on the leaf that feed.
" From end to end the garden, thus I've pass'd,
" Despairing, groaning, gloomily o'ercast.
" With nervous strength I've handled well the spade,
" Cut through the turf, and dug the heavy glade;
" Till by the dint of force I've chang'd the scene,
" And brought to brown what late before was green.
" With care, alternate ridge and dale I've made,
" To keep in earth the rising celery's head;
" Remov'd the frames, the tender shrub to breathe,
" And others place the crystal bells beneath.
" Pleasing employ! but yet I felt a pain;
" Alas! I sought for comfort still in vain.
" My master kindly strove to sooth my care,
" And ease the burden of my deep despair.
" Full oft I've rose at early dawn of morn,
" And brush'd around the fields of rip'ning corn;

" Some clatt'ring scarecrow to erect in sight,
" High on the bank, the plund'ring birds to fright.
" The tall wild *poppy* of vermilion hue,
" And the *cyanus*, bright with glossy blue,
" I've freshly gather'd from the corn so green,
" And weav'd a wreath with boxen leaves between;
" Ah, *luckless wreath!* neglected, with'ring there,
" Never to grace proud *Jenny's* auburn hair:
" Thou still an emblem of those hopes shalt be,
" Those fallen hopes, that once did flatter me.
" How griev'd my heart at even, when I've seen
" Young lovers loit'ring o'er the level green!
" I, while they danc'd on light fantastic toe,
" Have found my spirits overcome with woe.
" And when at night tir'd nature fain would rest,
" I've kept awake, unhappily oppress'd,
" Soft slumber hast'ning from my tearful eyes,
" While my rent bosom heav'd afflicting sighs.

" Say truly, friend, now I've these things confess'd,
" Has greater grief than mine thy soul distress'd?
" Did e'er cross'd love thy early pleasures taint,
" Vex thy warm breast, and cause thee to lament?
" Say, at thy home, more happy still to be,
" Dwells the good wife, source of felicity;
" With children young thy wishes gratified,
" And gifted blessings crown thy fire-side?
" How gladly I from wandering would forbear,
" Suspend my sorrows, and dismiss my care!
" More willingly a while with thee I'd stay,
" Aid thy hard labour, thy known will obey:
" Deny'd in which, my weary steps I'll turn,
" Far in the vale, unheard, unknown, to mourn."
To whom the other kindly thus replies:
" Youth, I'm concern'd to hear your plaintive sighs;
" Deep is the root from whence your sorrow springs,
" Nor more advice the balm of comfort brings:

" Still from experience learn one truth to know,
" Love is a foible, indolent and low,
" Derives its growth from weakness of the heart,
" Unnerves our strength, and leaves a rankling dart.
" Full thirty years ago its power I knew:
" My wife *Dorinda* mark'd my passion true,
" Yet would essay her fickle arts in vain;
" But I with scorn return'd her proud disdain,
" Laugh'd when she smil'd, or angry have I frown'd,
" Join'd in her songs, and made the place resound.
" One morn in May how chang'd indeed was she!
" Her thoughts were wholly occupied by me.
" Then was the time I could no more withstand;
" I shew'd the ring, and soon obtain'd her hand:
" Since which no more of love I ever knew,
" But day by day my labour I pursue:
" 'Mid sturdy trees I drive the pointed wedge,
" Lop from the trunk the rough redundant ledge;

" A tyrant in this forest I appear,
" Who levies desolation far and near.
" Were you, young man, to labour once inclin'd,
" Not stupid grief could more oppress your mind:
" Come try the drift, a weighty axe receive,
" And what you earn, the whole to you I'll give."

The woodman ceas'd, while stepping to the shed,
Clean on a block his humble fare to spread;
Draws his clasp-knife, divides his salted meat,
Divides his bread, and bids our Gilbert eat:
A taper'd horn with home-brew'd liquor stor'd,
Pour'd from the keg, adorns the rustic board;
With ale concludes the morning's cool repast.
The willing youth to work betakes at last;
A pond'rous axe his nervous hands sustain,
Behind the tree he tries his strength amain,
Intently earnest, closer still he goes,
Exerts his force, and gives repeated blows.

Struck to the root, the stubborn oak must yield,
Lean more and more with strokes the woodmen wield;
The deep incision bears its way all round,
Till down the branches crash along the ground:
Here left awhile to drench the moss-grown plain,
The dripping sap through sundry channels drain,
Falls drop by drop, and, gathering at the foot,
O'erflows the bason of the stunted root.

The timber fell'd, the youth with ardour glows,
His powers renew'd, he lops the cumb'rous boughs;
Soon every branch the parent tree disown,
And rough the trunk extends its length alone;
With lesser pains the splinters he divides,
And heaps on heaps he into faggots ties,
A pile of fuel near the spot to raise,
To cheer the winter by a friendly blaze.

Now mid-day's come, once more the sparkling ale
Exhilarates their spirits as they fail,

Renews their strength—to work again they go,
Long to repeat the wide-resounding blow.
As in the climes where order'd *vines* extend,
A sov'reign pow'r the ills of life to mend,
The *grape's* known virtues, squeez'd into the bowl,
Enliven better each industrious soul:
But wine like this the boasted cellars lack,
Where viler mixtures drug in every stack,
Mere water, cider, spirits, juice of sloes;
Preferr'd to *ale* its excellence who knows?
Ah! where such dregs the festive board disgrace,
Still may the drinker boast a paler face!
The heady liquor modestly refuse,
Or worse expect by this destructive juice.
His toil now done, the rustic leads the swain
Across the forest and the distant plain:
A bunch of sticks alternate each one bears;
The woodman whistles while the youth despairs,

One sings with glee, the other's frequent sigh,
Unfolds a heart divest of ev'ry joy:
By bitter anguish *Gilbert's* much oppress'd,
His heavy sorrow throbs his pensive breast.
A cleanly cottage overtops the vale,
Securely fenc'd by many a sturdy pale:
The woodman's load rebounds against the gate,
The children run, and glad his smile await;
He welcomes heartily his lovelorn guest,
Exerts his skill, and tries the merry jest.
High on the hearth ascends the cheerful blaze,
Illumes the room, and shines the sidelong gaze;
The oaken drawers usurp the proudest place,
Fresh gather'd flowers two shining vessels grace,
Here, side to side, the chairs are fix'd around,
The six old chairs for strength of years renown'd;
Sweetly the linnet charms the listening ear,
A few dark pictures on the walls appear.

Rubb'd with nice art the cupboard shines more bright,
Its varnish'd front reflects the wav'ring light;
A curious clock repeats the cuckoo's note,
And strikes each time a silver sound to float.
Young *Gilbert* view'd the woodman's humble state,
A king might envy such their happy fate;
Here every face felicity express'd,
Here rural life a certain charm confess'd.
With kind concern the wife her cares essays,
Lifts out the board, and straight the knives she lays;
Brings four wood trenchers, long esteem'd her best,
Placing them round for family and guest.
Her eldest son o'er distant fields returns,
A lusty blade, who to be idle scorns;
A shepherd's boy, untaught, of manners plain,
Coarse his poor garb, and wild his oaten strain.
He from the flame the heatful cover bears,
Helping his mother in her anxious cares;

Unloos'd the lid, a spiral steam issues,
Two wholesome dumplings nicely boil'd he views;
Plac'd in the midst, salt ham and greens invite,
With savoury smell, the sharpen'd appetite;
The little group their different stations take,
And all, save one, a hearty supper make:—
In vain they press the stranger, vain entreat
He'd end his grief, and strive his meal to eat;
In vain he strives—his tears he'd fain forego,
His starting tears, expressing well his woe.

Now supper ends, the frugal crumbs are clear'd,
The master's voice above the rest is heard:
" To morrow morn, by order, we must go
" To load the timber fell'd by many a blow;
" On the rough common-waste, as heretofore,
" With sapless lops increase the 'squire's big store,
" While his due rent the tenants to him bring,
" And from industry all his riches spring.

" Just at the rising of the early dawn,
" Fetch up the team along the wide-fenc'd lawn;
" Prepare the bolted hooks, the clanking chains,
" The levers, poles, and rollers, aid our pains.
" A jovial day in labouring hard we'll spend,
" With sparkling ale our utmost powers extend,
" Recruit our spirits while at rest we stand;
" Our *Gilbert* here will lend a helping hand.
" But did your master, when my wish you told,
" Say he'd, for once, secure the sheep in fold?
" Gave he consent to your assisting me,
" By taking charge of all one day from thee?
" Or by a mean, unfriendly, flat excuse,
" Did he the office of your aid refuse?
" He knows full well I never him deny,
" Whene'er he craves a little fuel dry."
To which the son with modesty replies,
" The courteous shepherd seldomer denies;

" He oft remarks my close, assiduous pains
" Make full amends—by kindnesses he gains:
" Sometimes he grants a holiday's advance,
" I, round the Maypole, join in festive dance;
" Or, on the green to chase the rural maids,
" I'm oft the foremost of the village blades;—
" In such like sports no cares e'er intervene,
" The same with labour after I begin.
" Just at the rising of the early dawn,
" I'll fetch the oxen o'er the dewy lawn;
" I'll bring the bolted hooks—the clanking chains,
" The levers, poles, and rollers, aid our pains."
And now the home-brew'd ale its virtue shews:
Brown shelling nuts the humble banquet close;
The wakeful children at the sight feel pleas'd,
The shells are broken, and the kernels seiz'd.
O'er lively tales with laughter *Mirth* presides,
Now here, now there, her fav'rite lore divides:

The honest woodman and the matron sing,
The shepherd plays the bladder's sounding string.
Sorrow, long cherish'd, leaves the *lover's* breast,
He cracks his nuts to cater like the rest;
Forgets his troubles, chokes each rising sigh,
Starts for a joke, and pleases merrily.
As Time for none will make the least delay,
E'en swifter flies the more we wish his stay;
So sure the hours unheeded lightly pass'd,
Then each retiring, sought sweet sleep at last.

GILBERT.

BOOK II.

CANTO III.

ARGUMENT.

Morning, &c. Return to the wood. Loading the timber. Dinner, &c. Piling the faggots. Solitude. Tea-drinking in the cottage. Farmer's boy, &c. Story of poor Susan. Distant view of the farm. Praise of natural endowments —applicable to Mr. Bloomfield.

Time. One day more is employed in the second book.

CANTO III.

HOW sweetly sleep, amid the night's void hours,
Recruits our strength, renews our wasted powers;
Affords tir'd Nature vigorous supplies,
Befriends our labours, renovates our joys!
Nor on the proud alone, nor tyrant kings,
Awaits the blessing—free to all it springs;
Save, in the dungeon, where the wretch of ill
Is chain'd on straw—sleep may forsake him still.

Happy that man, who, at the evening's close,
With thoughts unruffled, sinks into repose;
No cares, through vice, perplex his quiet breast;
Nor frightful dreams break in upon his rest;
But rightly good, his conscience bears no stains;
He, undisturb'd, beloved sleep obtains.
The morning breaks, Aurora bright appears;
Sol darts his rays, dries Nature's dewy tears:
From slumber ris'n, the woodman wakes the swain;
The shepherd's boy had early sought the plain,
First drove the team to wait behind the door,
Then brought the chains, and rollers us'd before.

Along the common to the woods they pass,
Brushing the wat'ry margin of the grass;
On every blade dependent crystals shine,
High on each branch the birds in matins join:
Nor yield the hedges yet a luscious food,
Nor clust'ring hips and haws enrich the wood;

But left for *frost* their stubborn rind to bite,
When the snow, falling, clothes the fields in white.
Wise Providence divinely shows his care,
Provides for all on earth, in sea, in air;
His power sustains, his bounteous gifts supply,
The little birds, from spray to spray that fly.
Close up the hill the harmless oxen go,
Wind through the dale, the woodland site below;
Where scatter'd lie the fallen trees around,
With all their branches levell'd on the ground.
And to the well-known hut the men repair,
Unload the implements with speed, with care;
Yet, ere they work, they take an hour's regale,
Eat what they list, and drink their share of ale.
Fast to each trunk they bolt the rattling chain,
Guide the strong poles, the rollers sweep the plain;
They, orderly, by one and one proceed,
Till every balk appears along the mead;

Where strength they lack, the lever lends its aid,
To load the wain with six firm wheels display'd;
The oxen slowly draw the wain along;
The woodman cheerly sings a rural song.
Well-pleas'd, the brave triumvirate survey'd
The lengths of timber on the common laid:
And, as the wight, who ploughs the ocean o'er,
Encounters toils while adding to his store,
The stock acquir'd reveals th' unweary'd strokes,
Struck at the roots of fir-trees, pines, and oaks.
Perplex'd in mind, our *Gilbert* quits the plain;
Dorinda kindly bids him in again.
His two compeers to welcome stable lead
The useful kine, on good new hay to feed:
Give rest their limbs till noon's relaxing sun,
The better half of their hard work is done;
No more remains their final task to seal,
Than the dried fuel in the cart to wheel.

And now to dine the handy dame prepares;
Withal essays to lull the stranger's cares—
Ah me! such cares that bitterly assail
His anxious mind, till every succour fail.
An iron pan, o'er the clear embers plac'd,
Holds the fresh eggs, the bacon fine in taste,
Cut in nice slices, streak'd with red and white,
Fries crispy brown, true relish to excite.
They fix the chairs to front where trenchers stand;
The helpful wife deals out with ready hand:
By which refresh'd they rise, renew their toil,
To bring the sticks, and raise the lofty pile.
Within the stable go the men apart,
They link the team to draw the lumb'ring cart
Across the upland path, the verdant plain,
The common field, the wasting wood's domain.
Arriv'd, at even distances they stand,
Hurling the faggots o'er the stumpy land;

The crackling heaps upheld above the glade,
High on the cart the burden's closely laid.
At several times the team the treasure brings;
Then o'er the common, pile on pile upsprings:
The squire's big stock the best of prices bear,
The rougher lops, the balks of timber square.

Meanwhile our *Gilbert* seeks to ease his mind,
Steals in the wood, and loiters far behind;
Here lies the tree he'd fell'd the day before,
He marks it's drying, withering boughs, once more.
In solitude he ponders o'er his fate,
Lone solitude befits his hapless state:
No jocose woodman cheers the solemn spot,
Or pours libations in the branch-form'd cot;
No axe resounds where late the sticks were pil'd,
To guide him wand'ring through the mazy wild;
But dull the scene—increasing gloom prevails,
Till the poor youth his destiny bewails.

Reason awakes, our suff'ring swain to aid;
Lorn he returns along the shelving glade.
Pleas'd, the blithe woodman and his son behold
The pensive stranger near the neighb'ring fold;
Attune their holla his slow steps to haste,
Till he rejoins them on the rugged waste.

Lo! now the time of drinking tea arrives:
The cleanly matron seems the best of wives;
Slice after slice of home-made bread she toasts,
Her butter, cream, and treacle too, she boasts.
Nor china cups the beverage contain,
Nor pompous tea-urn fits the humble train;
Of coarser fabric stout the set is made,
And where they break, the loss is soon repaid.
'Neath humbler roofs Simplicity is found;
Lo! where she dwells contentment smiles around.
With less requir'd, the best is man supplied,
His little wants the sooner satisfied:

But where the mind's on more than needful bent,
Adieu, simplicity! adieu, content!
Farewell those charms, to grace a cottage left!
He's evermore of happiness bereft.
While drinking tea the rustic group are plac'd,
Lorn *Gilbert* sickens at the transient jest;
His every look unhappiness displays,
Unfit to hail the social hearth's bright blaze.
Lo! he'll retire; a reason he assigns;
To weep in fav'rite solitude he pines:—
Starts up resolv'd—they crave his longer stay;
He bids farewell, and hastens on his way.
Across the common, now he saunt'ring goes,
Grief wrings his soul, and heavy are his woes;
He southern travels o'er the vary'd fields,
Till 'side a pond, to rest awhile he yields.
Near to the margin walking in despair,
With sighs and groans he rends the evening air.

A farmer's boy comes driving down his team;
To give the horses drink amidst the stream;
The lover's doleful plight attracts his eyes;
He whistles, shouts, dismounts, and to him flies.
" Ah! tell me, friend, what you're about to do!
" The river's springs may fatal prove to you.
" Near to it's brink, see, nine green willows grow,
" Each one is carv'd with sundry hearts below;
" The wretched carver perish'd in my view,
" Lo! in the wave himself he headlong threw:
" I instant div'd, the body brought on shore—
" Alas! too late—his life-blood ebb'd no more.
" Known in the vale, the father's name is John;
" His harmless mirth's for ever, ever gone!
" Tearing his whiten'd locks, he beats his breast;
" Ne'er look'd since, nor once essay'd a jest;
" Which on my mind a deep impression stamps,
" Excites soft pity and my pleasures damps.

" Poor stranger! come, your secret ills confess,
" Explain the cause you suffer such distress;
" Why seek alone, the solitary pass,
" Where the wild weeds shoot rankly o'er the grass?
" 'Tis sev'ral miles to town—'tis evening's close;—
" And your deportment speaks your very woes."
Gilbert, half angry, answers him aright;
" Farmer, forbear; nor mock my wayward plight:
" I'm one, indeed, by every ill sore vex'd,
" My passion slighted, and my mind perplex'd:
" A cruel maiden leads me to complain,
" Sets out her charms; but trifles with my pain:
" Friend, linger not; dismiss your groundless fear,
" 'Twas merely chance that brought me wandering here.
" Alas! though sorrow festers in my breast,
" A change of place affords some little rest:
" A change of place relieves my stubborn woe,
" And yields the short-liv'd pleasure grief may know.

" I've wound my course through many a vale and grove,
" O'er wintery wastes, o'er stubbled fields I rove;
" Parch'd up by thirst, I've sought the murm'ring rill,
" And, for my food, the turnip-growing hill:
" Ah! where smooth bricks are burnt, on clay-red plains,
" A bak'd potatoe oft rewards my pains;
" I lie, at night, extended on the grass;
" And such the life of misery I pass."
" 'Tis misery indeed," the boy replies;
" Lo! what you say awakens my surprise:
" Such once was SUSAN's melancholy state,
" Doom'd by the rigour of severer fate.
" Our servant she, and well by all belov'd,
" Till some young soldier cruel to her prov'd:
" No more the drum's and fife's enliv'ning sound
" Spread universal mirth and glee around;
" But to yon village did the blades repair,
" To list the swains, and overcome the fair.

" Alas! poor *Susan* bitterly repin'd,
" Yet strove to hide the anguish of her mind:
" Her mind's distemper every day increas'd,
" Until, at length, her tears she seldom ceas'd.
" Desponding cares seiz'd on the lovelorn dame,
" Her senses fled—more wretched she became.
" Nightly she wander'd in the lonely field,
" A piteous sight as ever you beheld:
" Beneath a stack she'd fix herself to lie,
" Vent wild her plaint, and sigh add still to sigh;
" Or by the moon's pale light would rings prepare,
" And bracelets for her arms of plaited hair.
" Poor hapless girl!—but death has set her free!
" Aside her grave there grows the lone yew-tree;
" No sculptur'd stone to head the turf is found,
" But grass and nettles skirt the border round:
" Her fortune hard, unkind her luckless doom,
" Early she sunk a victim to the tomb.

" Come then, young man, your stubborn cares forego,
" Cheer up your spirits, and dismiss your woe;
" Take friendly warning from this tale so true,
" Nor let your sorrow fatal prove to you.
" Ah! turn with me—thy lodging I'll provide
" Within the loft, I'll give thee food beside;
" To morrow morn, my master, I'll engage,
" Will hire your service, and your grief assuage."
This *Gilbert* hearing, he wipes dry his eyes,
Cheers up his sinking spirits, and replies:
" My ever-grateful thanks to you are due;
" Your fair advice assur'dly I'll pursue.
" Though in the fields I'd plann'd the night to spend,
" Say where you go, I'll on your steps attend:
" Such good, unlook'd-for, elevates my mind;
" Fruits of your friendship and compassion kind."
In saying which, along the bank they haste;
Both mount the team, and ride across the waste.

A fence of pales the common terminates;
The boy gets down, unbars the wooden gates:
Slow pace the horses through a dirty lane,
Where prouder hawthorn veils the mellow plain.
At certain distance *Gilbert* soon espies
A new-built farm-house, barn and shed besides;
Five heapy stacks, new corn, new hay he views;
The pigeons flying far his eye pursues;
He sees the orchard where fine apples grow,
On branches bending by their weight below,
Some wandering truant seeming to invite,
Come pluck my fruit so tempting to your sight!
Beyond the wall, a useful garden bears
Roots of all kinds, to crown the wasting years:
The tasteful leek, sweet-marjorum, and thyme,
And parsley, growing more 'tis cut to prime;
The white-heart cabbage in the rear is seen,
The vermil carrot headed well with green:

A full variety of useful plants,
Supplying well the farmer's daily wants.
Such ample store our *Gilbert's* fain to view,
While slow the team their sluggish course pursue:
The farmer's boy the upland path explores,
Dismounts below, and opes the stable doors;
His usual care to feed his charge bestow'd,
He and his friend repass the narrow road;
A strong desire his anxious breast betrays,
To free the sufferer, and his spirits raise.
Kind, gentle youth! with education scant,
He boasts a heart to help the wretch of want;
A steady stripling, ever well inclin'd
To follow the good dictates of his mind.
Where bountifully NATURE's gifts dispense,
The rustic hind arrives at excellence;
Arrives at knowledge, unacquir'd from schools,
And guides his actions by his self-taught rules:

Then shines with force, the high enlighten'd soul,
Renown extending to the utmost pole,
Till all mankind behold the lasting blaze,
And emulation dignifying raise.
Bloomfield! to thee this striking truth applies;
Who reads, applauds;—thy works increase our joys:
Fame shall add more to thy immortal page,
Shall add more merit each succeeding age;
Beam the strong light of thy celestial fire,
And still enrapture by thy heaven-strung lyre.

GILBERT.

BOOK II.

CANTO IV.

ARGUMENT.

Night, Reflections, &c. Gilbert takes up his lodging in a hay-loft. He gives a fuller account of his adventures; is left alone. The amorous girl disappointed. Gilbert ruminates on the incident, and at length falls asleep.

Time. One day more is employed in the second book.

CANTO IV.

AS days revolve, eventful change takes place;
Some rise in power, some sink into disgrace:
Lo! in this world, strange ups and downs await,
Kings, princes, *beggars*, ministers of state.
Who needs go far, one painful truth to note?
How worth is left to wear a thread-bare coat!
While the rich fool his pamper'd wish enjoys,
And foully revels 'midst of luxuries.

Merit avails but little here at best,
To raise the bard by poverty deprest;
We are not found to pass our judgment light,
Since few, 'tis thought, in rags can argue right.
Yet oft kind Fortune fair endeavours crowns,
Bestows rewards, bids smiles succeed to frowns:
Haply the poet strives no more in vain;
But from the *press* encores his heavenly strain:
He gains applause—the muse his lay inspires,
Bids genius wake, and warms with all her fires.
Now the full Moon expands, the kindly ray,
Shot 'thwart, increases by departing day;
Afar and near she spreads her sacred light,
And silvers o'er the heavy gloom of night.
Where stands the five-bar hedge-gate near the waste,
The farmer's boy and *Gilbert* thither haste;
A scaling-ladder's fix'd against the boards,
The barn a shelt'ring canopy affords.

Dry useful fodder forms a shelving stack,
Pil'd to the tiling o'er the stable-rack,
Bags fill'd with oats and beans, a goodly store,
Spreads the broad surface of the rougher floor.
Gilbert bemoans, unhappily forlorn;
His friend's retir'd, but soon he'll back return:
He comes with bread and cheese to show his care;
First parts the whole, then gives the youth a share.
The rough wind ceas'd, the sky's serenely bright,
Nor clouds eclipse pale Cynthia's welcome light,
Who darts her beams through many a chinky way,
Shining the atoms o'er the chaff's display.

And now the boy from *Gilbert* seeks to know,
If other pangs than love excite his woe;
He, by his friends deserted, did appear
As though hard fortune dealt with him severe:
" Say, is it love affects your pensive mind;
" Or do relations treat you still unkind?

" Once more confess what mean these far-fetch'd sighs,
" These groans, these tears that wet your glist'ning eyes:
" No base design leads me to speak these words;
" Sweet consolation friendship oft affords:
" Your sev'ral cares to your true friend disclose,
" Who may perchance find ways to ease your woes."
The other cries, " Your wish I'll not deny:
" 'Tis luckless love occasions me to sigh:
" Fair JANE, of Bawtry's distant town, 'tis she
" Whose wayward slights have long affected me:
" A carrier once, I drove a tilted cart,
" Conveying goods in safety to the mart:
" Oft, at the turnpike, I have form'd excuse
" To call and loiter, telling some rare news:
" Her parents knew my inclination well,
" With pleasure mark'd whate'er I stood to tell:
" But scornful *Jenny* scarce a look would deign,
" To ease the anguish of my stubborn pain.

" One New-year's day I'd purchas'd at the fair
" A store of ribands, none of which she'd wear:
" Another time I'd bought a new straw hat;
" Nor did perceive the crown was quite too flat!
" In anger she rose up, assum'd ill state,
" Brush'd by, observing, I'd no need to wait;
" Bounc'd in the garden through a rifted door:
" Away I came—I've heard of her no more.
" With slower pace the team I drove forlorn,
" Left all that night, nor since have ceas'd to mourn;
" O'er hill and dale I've shap'd my lonely way,
" Sought deeper gloom, and cherish'd my dismay."
To whom his friend: " How cruel *Jane* has prov'd,
" To use you thus, sincerely as you lov'd!
" For me, no more I'll wonder at your grief—
" 'Tis only *she* who can afford relief!
" Thanks to my stars, not so my happy fate
" Perplex'd me courting our good servant Kate!

" A ruddy maid, religiously inclin'd,
" Of virtuous mould, and careful turn of mind.
" She soon grew fond, by soft persuasion led,
" Agreed with me at proper time to wed;
" Next with our wages some neat cot we'll rent,
" And buy a pig to add to our content.
" Awhile adieu! I now must home return—
" *Gilbert*, farewell! nor longer vainly mourn.
" With you my ivory spying-glass I'll leave,
" To view the moon, and thus the time deceive.
" A Cobler, late, instructed me to spy
" The num'rous specks which twinkle 'mid the sky:
" He'd fix'd his glass in leather, so complete,
" That, when drawn out, it measur'd seven feet.
" Again adieu! nor think on *Jenny's* scorn—
" I'll be the first to call you in the morn;
" Here, on the hay, for once your lodging take;
" To-morrow night a better shift we'll make."

This saying, closely shaking hands, they part;
A sincere friendship dwells in either heart;
Nor either selfish interests excite,
Their minds congenial sentiments unite;
Linking in other bonds than kindred chains,
Or mercenary hopes, or look'd-for gains.

Now lone and drear, young *Gilbert* vainly tries
To cheer his spirits, to forego his sighs;
But, ah! dire woes convulse his inmost soul,
While, unrestrain'd, his tears incessant roll.
With limbs relax'd, in agony he lay,
Extended out upon the covering hay,
Praying for slumber to assuage his care;
But slumber flies the wretch of deep despair.

Three tedious hours our hopeless lover's pass'd—
Lo! from his stupor he's constrain'd at last:
A gentle tapping on the boards he hears;
His mind's assail'd by various doubts and fears:

The noise continues, up he starts amaz'd;
He grows courageous, the trap-door is rais'd:—
A damsel waiting, meets his stricken eyes,
Confounds his thoughts, and fills him with surprise.
No looks of softness glisten o'er her face,
Nor charms express the bloom of youthful grace,
Rip'ning in beauty; nor a form complete,
To keep the lover kneeling at her feet:
Devoid of all, above the steps she springs,
Sits on the hay, and thus to speak begins:
" Young lad, dismiss your vain surprise and fear!
" The farmer's man declar'd how you came here.
" A sneaking kindness he forsooth pretends;
" No more of that—let you and me be friends:
" 'Tis very late—the folks are all asleep,
" From my warm bed in silence I did creep;
" All negligent myself you see I've clad,
" I flew down stairs to make your bosom glad.

" How pleas'd am I!—away your needless fear!
" Embrace sweet *Kitty* like no looby here:
" My kind respects to some poor hind I've shown,
" Can he do less than love but me alone?"
In speaking this, on *Gilbert* fix'd, her eyes
Shoot kinder glances—amorously she sighs:
Moves nigher still, her purpose to pursue,
And bares her snowy bosom full in view.
What fierce temptation for our lovelorn swain!
He strives to speak—alas! he strives in vain:
His every look, with wonder strange impress'd,
Displays the state of his impassion'd breast.
To such discourse if he should e'er attend,
'Twould injure cruelly his sincere friend:
Still seem'd that friend in *Kitty* much deceiv'd;
A faithless fair, though otherwise believ'd.
Now fires his blood to burn through every vein,
Now prudence cools the fiery course again;

Confus'd he stands, nor yet he silence breaks;—
Now more collected, thus he falt'ring speaks:
" Cease, O fair maid! to tempt a wretch forlorn,
" And from the hay-loft quickly back return:
" For me, poor wight, unworthy still I prove;
" Nor can I meet with ardour due your love:—
" Alas! your breast a guilty passion glows,
" It heats your blood, and virtue overthrows:
" Yet better judgment still shall guide my way;
" I scorn the crime that would my friend betray.
" He late confess'd, it were by both agreed,
" Both you and him, to wed with proper speed,
" Adding your wages some neat cot to rent,
" Your two years' wages, none of which you've spent."
Then to himself: " Ah, *Jane!* unlike to she!
" Were all your fond affection fix'd on me,
" Nor longer as a vagrant I would roam,
" But stay with thee for happiness at home.

" Ah! not to me such joys as these belong;
" I'm doom'd to know of ills a mighty throng:
" My troubled soul by heavy grief's oppress'd,
" Dull care corrodes my e'er desponding breast."
He ceasing, dares not on her look again;
One fatal smile might make his purpose vain.
The maid observant, thus resumes her lore,
But not in mood so jocose as before:
" For shame, young swain, to use me so severe!
" To be insulted sure I came not here:
" I heard your case, soft pity fill'd my breast,
" My guilty passion finish'd all the rest:
" Still not my pity, not my passion told,
" Can warm a heart that stubborn is and cold;
" No more I'll fondly tempt a wretch forlorn,
" But from the hay-loft quickly I'll return.
" My proffer'd kindnesses your scorn excite;
" Add no exposure to your cruel slight:

" Disgrace attends whene'er the thing is known,
" And I shall rue my meeting you alone."
At which, she rising, hastily retires,
Her hopes all fled, and dampt her amorous fires;
Back to her bed her silent way she hies,
Falls fast asleep, and goodly dreams enjoys.
Our *Gilbert* by himself is left once more,
To dwell with solemn silence as before:
The strange adventure strikes with new surprise,
Suspends his grief, and sooths his dreary sighs:
Stretch'd on the hay his weary limbs he rests;
Soft slumber comes, no more dull care molests:
Forgot his griefs, and *Jenny's* slights and scorn,
He lies asleep, nor wakes till rising morn.

GILBERT.

BOOK III.

CANTO V.

ARGUMENT.

The return of day. Mistake cleared up. Character of the farmer; his family described. Gilbert is disappointed; proceeds on his journey. Stubbled field, &c. Burning the brakes. Advantages, &c. attendant on cleanliness.

TIME. One day more is employed in the third book.

CANTO V.

AURORA wakes the rosy dawn of day;
Our mournful lover quits his bed of hay,
Shakes off dull sloth, and thence his steps to bend,
He waits impatiently to see his friend.
The trap-door sounds, some person knock he hears;
The farmer's boy before his sight appears,
With soothing voice, inquiring kind to know
How rested he amidst his care and woe?

Young *Gilbert*, smiling, speaks as things accord,
Save of sweet Kate he mentions not a word;
He better thinks to let the matter rest,
A secret matter in his pensive breast.
Short time they stand—the morn's too good to waste;
They o'er the threshold down the ladder haste;
To milk the cows they've cross the fields to go;
Young *Kitty* loiters near the stile below.
But what could equal *Gilbert's* new surprise,
When first the damsel met his wond'ring eyes!
He stood convinc'd the same she could not be,
Who'd in the hay-loft been so kindly free.
He feels new joy—it glistens o'er his face,
His friend through *Kitty* suffers no disgrace:
Yet who were she, or whence, that courting came,
He'd gladly know, but dare not ask the same.
With fodder for the cows, and pails scour'd clean,
Kate and her sweetheart walk across the green:

Poor *Gilbert* too;—how hard his sorrows press!
These lovers' joys awaken his distress.
Along the lane where clust'ring hazels grow,
And black-thorn bushes screen the weeds below,
Smooth paving-stones, laid level, keep the feet
From plunging deep 'midst ruts of dirt and wet.
They singly each across the flat proceed
To where the cow-barn rising tops the mead;
Down set their pails—the doors wide open stand,
Out come the cows, a lazy lowing band.
Where rails or ropes confine the spot each side,
With streams of milk the vessel's well supplied.
The loaded udder yields its valu'd store;
The kine, unloosen'd, seek the mead once more:
Not far they stray between the verdant hills;
Where grow the larches bordering the green fields;
The tender grass invites them to the plain,
'Till milking time, at eve, return again.

Now home the servants bend their steps with care;
High on their heads a store of milk they bear:
A ready hand poor willing *Gilbert* lends,
But trembling fear his slower steps attends;
He thinks enough he's cause to feel dismay'd,
A step awry may make him kick the glade,
Dash down his pail to flow—(most piteous sight!)
Banish his hopes, increase his wretched plight:
Just through the lane the smoothest path he seeks;
Safe on the green arriv'd, he silence breaks,
Wishing in secret guise to learn her name,
Who late at night to seek a lover came:
" I'd gladly have it well explain'd by you,
" What kind of labour I am bound to do;
" Instruction give where I most stand in need,
" And prove to me a friend sincere indeed.
" The farmer's son's or daughter's temper tell:
" A deal depends, I'd fain obey them well;

" Avoiding wrong, I'd what is right pursue;
" Nor servile prove, but pay attention due."
His friend replies, " 'Tis meet you're told the same:
" Our master has one daughter, *Joyce* by name;
" A comely wench of sanguine mould is she,
" And, when she's pleas'd, bestows her favours free:
" Affront her once, nor more yourself deceive,
" 'Tis not her nature ever to forgive;
" Her passion heated, lo! the vixen flies
" Into a rage,—dire vengeance gleams her eyes.
" The sire, with anxious tenderness at heart,
" Strives for the welfare of his house apart:
" His duteous son becoming reverence pays,
" His second wife submissively obeys.
" Yet is he apt, at times, to swear them harm,
" He beats the dame, drives *Richard* from the farm:
" His anger vented, peace he soon restores;
" Bids both return, and much his fault deplores.

This spoken, safe they measure back the ground,
And in the yard the ample pails set down:
The milk warm-reeking 'mid the dairy stor'd,
Yields up rich cream, fresh butter to afford.
Then on the farmer next the boy attends,
While pensive *Gilbert* to the hay-loft bends:
There long he waits the grand result to know,
And clouded care with sorrow marks his brow.
Strange troubling whims his tortur'd soul assail,
And o'er his reason folly would prevail,
Vexing his mind with many a sad surmise,
New fears to form, and various doubts likewise:
The vixen *Joyce* may vent her bitter rage,
Persuade her sire no stranger to engage,
Still to prevent her being expos'd outright,
Should *Kate* e'er wish to bring the truth to light.

But soon his thoughts from wandering thus he stay'd;
The gentle youth at distance he survey'd,

By whose deportment easily he guess'd,
That sanguine hope had fled his pensive breast.
With falt'ring voice to speak the boy began:
" Ah me! ill luck betides our little plan!
" My master frowns—he my endeavour foils,
" Nor will admit you sharer in our toils.
" Just now I've been the farmer's will to hear;
" His voice—O! how unusually severe!
" He says no vagrants shall his grounds infest,
" Nor yet his peace or family's molest.
" Refusing which more clearly to explain,
" Lo! I made bold to ask him o'er again:
" Full angry, then, he in great passion swore,
" He'd nail me up against the first barn-door:
" A broken flail in both his hands he took,
" And thrice my back with mighty force he struck.
" For fear of worse disaster swift I ran,
" And met my *Kitty* in the narrow lane.

" To whom the whole mishap I soon express'd;
" She, with a sigh, herself in blame confess'd:
" Thinking no harm, when met by *Joyce*, the scold,
" The secret things concerning you she told.
" At morn the daughter waits upon her sire,
" Betrays us both—inveterate 's her ire:
" Her father swore, believing all she said,
" Swore that no stroller o'er his doors should tread!
" How things have chang'd! now adverse thoughts succeed!
" Be you refresh'd, your wav'ring journey speed;
" Here is your breakfast, good new milk and cake,
" And here's some money, which I hope you'll take:
" My spying-glass I'll give to you likewise,
" You'll think on me whene'er it meets your eyes.
" May change of place in time your ease restore,
" And *Jenny's* scorn create your grief no more.
" Farewell, dear friend!"—Our *Gilbert* heav'd a sigh,
Wip'd the rife tear, and thus essay'd reply:

" Alas! alas! your hapless cares forego,
" Your master's wrath increases not my woe:
" Thinks he, perhaps, his prudence he'll o'errate,
" And leave a wandering vagrant to his fate.
" His daughter's words full credit must obtain,
" And while he's vex'd, your pity comes in vain.
" Strange as it is, I feel the less distress'd;
" I might have prov'd a stupid thing at best,
" More giv'n to grieve, beneath some tree reclin'd,
" Than, as I ought, the farmer's work to mind.
" Alas! farewell!—your spying-glass I'll take,
" And keep the same a token for your sake;
" But nothing more: your money I return;
" You're better worthy of the whole you earn.
" Farewell, for ever! Heav'n your hopes befriend!
" May fortune still on all your steps attend!
" And, since to me so much regard you've shown,
" My gratitude I cannot less but own."

He ceas'd; receiv'd the offer'd milk and bread;
Refresh'd by which, his way he quickly sped;
Far east the farm, with wand'ring steps he wound,
The road between the cultivated ground:
The stubbled field beyond a hedge appears,
'Cross the wood-stile his lonely course he veers:
Down the low slope, up the ridg'd hill he goes,
The stubble crackling 'neath his heavy shoes.
A mound he sees,—his glass he rests,—espies,
O'er the wide waste, thick clouds of smoke arise;
With eagerness towards the spot he turns,
Beholds a heap of *braking* as it burns.
Two lab'ring boys with fuel feed the fire,
Clear the light ashes while the flames aspire;
Then water bring to knead the whiter clay,
Form'd into balls against the market-day.
Where *cleanliness* excites the matron's pride,
To various uses are these balls applied;

The nice white hearth contrasts the red-brick floor,
The brighten'd hooks the mantel-piece explore.

Fair Cleanliness, sweet-scented, lovely maid!
How blest the cottage where thou art display'd!
Good *Health* delights to follow close thy train,
And *Poverty* may frown at thee in vain:
When thou 'midst want set'st out thy charms divine,
Still are we led to fancy plenty thine;
Thy magic touch gives things more value still;
And where thou dwell'st, the more content we feel.

GILBERT.

BOOK III.

CANTO VI.

ARGUMENT.

Gilbert proceeds on his way, and arrives at Worksop. Solitude, &c. Vales, groves, ruins, stagnant pond, &c. Some gipsies offer an invitation to Gilbert. He partakes their refreshment. Their king makes an harangue; relates his adventures, &c. The lover confesses what occasions his sorrows; he is derided, and takes up his lodging under a haystack.

TIME. **The space of one day is employed in the third book.**

CANTO VI.

NOW o'er the waste lorn *Gilbert* walks more fast;
A narrow plank, laid on the ditch, he pass'd;
At WORKSOP town he wheels his steps around,
Where the pav'd street his hobnail'd shoes resound.
He turns the corner to the pine-topt hills,
Treads slow the track that leads across the fields.
Behind, in sight, some ancient ruin lies;
Nigh where a church salutes the bending skies;

Two sister towers adorn the rev'rend pile;
Curv'd windows, arching, light the long-drawn aisle;
The yew-tree grows, the cypress lifts its head
Above the mansions of the mould'ring dead.

High up the hills the youth his way pursues,
Brings out his glass, the woodland site he views;
The woodland site with fatt'ning deer abounds,
Plenty of game o'er-stocks the neighb'ring grounds.
Down lonely vales in pensive mood he strays;
The temple ruins hail his mournful gaze:
The crumbling domes, the colonnades, the towers,
Cast deeper gloom, and dull the solemn hours.
Drear o'er this spot our lovelorn *Gilbert* roves,
Shaping his course amidst sequester'd groves;
The box, the larch, the laurel, fair to sight,
Thrive in the shade, and gain their utmost height.
Trees of dark foliage intersect the vale,
With branches proudly rustling in the gale;

GILBERT.

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W. M. Craig del.ᵗ J. Dadley sculp.ᵗ

And, where the waves reflect the azure skies,
Along the marsh the skirting rushes rise.
Close to a stagnant pond he bends his way;
The mantling cresses interpose his stay;
He picks the best, the worst away he throws,
Then eats his cheerless dinner ere he goes.
Clear from the rocks the gurgling stream issues;
He slakes his thirst: his journey he renews:
On the foot-path, beyond the bar, he hastes,
With quicker steps. Near the road-side he rests.
Broad sturdy oaks, thick elms, with poplar high,
Stand where the fir-tree apples scatter'd lie;
Or 'neath where chesnuts ripen on each bough,
The gorse, the wilding, and the broom-flow'rs grow;
Sharp stinging nettles, rankly run in seed,
Exalt their stems o'er many a humbler weed.
More eastward now the friendless *Gilbert* bends,
Far o'er the waste a ling'ring look he lends;

With stumbling pace he hies across the field,
And seeks the path the jarring gate conceal'd.
While slowly saunt'ring, careless where he went,
Two different roads to right and left present:
A posted board the travelling stranger spies;
He faster walks, till Mansfield hail his eyes.
A mile from town there stood some shelt'ring trees,
Beneath sat gipsies 'midst their tents at ease:
The lovelorn youth approaching nigh in sight,
They hear his groans, they view his wayward plight.
Amidst the gang two ember fires appear;
O'er one, three poles the boiling pan uprear:
A grateful steam in spiral clouds issued,
Denotes the cooking of some mess that's good.
These friendly gipsies beg he'd halt awhile,
Step in their tent, and every care beguile.
Invited kind, poor *Gilbert* gladly hears,
Joins with the throng, and banishes his fears.

Along the grass a whiter cloth they place,
Which various remnants of provision grace;
Delicious cates, fried fish, roast fowl, abound;
Hot savoury soup in dishes smokes around:
Low on the plain the gipsies take a seat;
With one accord invite their guest to eat:
The craving calls of nature better prove,
How unsubstantial is mere food of love.
Two tawny girls attend the gipsy band,
Fixing the goblets on a bench to stand;
Strong heady liquor from a vase one pours,
The other serves; loud mirth beguiles the hours:
Full soon the master of the nightly feasts,
Calls out to order, thus bespeaks his guests:
" Ye friends; sworn brothers! other ties than blood!
" Hear my decrees! let them be understood:
" 'Tis by our sway your great resources spring;
" My various schemes luxuriant blessings bring;

" In fortunes told I sum the best events ;
" Nor draw conclusions to confound the sense :
" But please the servants with my futile words,
" Who, in return, give what the place affords ;
" Large rounds of bread, or offal, broken meat,
" Or tasteful viands, fit for kings to eat :
" And I, embolden'd, seek a richer boon,
" Claim my reward, a silver table-spoon.
" Yet I have found some dubious what to do :
" Oft I'm compell'd the wiser girls to woo,
" To count the cards, renew my empty lore,
" And show how soon they may the spoon restore ;
" Till rising conscience like a vision fly,
" And I decamp rewarded truly high.
" Now, now's the time, the golden sun declines,
" The moon, unclouded, more supremely shines ;
" From yonder town the taper's amber blaze
" Darts through the trees, illumes the glist'ning gaze :

" Up, one and all, in secret guise to go,
" Explore the rails, and watch the maids below.
" Where creeking sign-boards, whistling to the gale,
" Express what goods poor tradesmen have on sale,
" Beg hard, or steal: infest the open square,
" Tempt the soft girls, and loll in plenty there!
" How rich in spoil, at dawn of day all met,
" You'll add the value of whate'er you get!
" My ample share, by right of rule, I'll claim;
" 'Tis I, the king, who bears you on to fame.
" Meantime observe, the young man I'll attend;
" A stranger quite; but I'll his case befriend:
" Our sundry laws I guess will set him right,
" Awake his courage, and his powers excite.
" By grand achievements in our state he'll rise,
" Till, like CAREW, his fame resounds the skies:
" Another king ye shall by me acquire,
" Ere from the arduous office I retire.

" Haste, comrades! all, to yonder town to go!
" Look through the rails, entice the girls below;
" Tell each her fortune, sum the best events,
" And draw conclusions fitting to the sense."

He spoke. The gang, the better to obey,
Start up in haste, the eldest lead the way;
A wicked crew, let loose in every street,
To beg, or steal, where'er they set their feet.
Where panes of glass expose the kitchen light,
They crouch to beg, or fortunes they'll recite:
The servant-girls new grievances unfold,
Still pleas'd to hear their goodly fortunes told.

When now our youth is by the king address'd:
" Pray, stranger, say, why throbs your lab'ring breast?
" 'Tis time to try your confidence to gain,
" By telling how I came o'er these to reign.
" Three years, or more, I left my native home,
" A whimsied journey o'er the plains to roam;

" I slowly saunter'd over hills and dales,
" Through shady woods, o'er common-wastes, and vales;
" Amidst a quarry down I sat to rest,
" Feeling with hunger, thirst, and grief oppress'd.
" Not far, a man in tatters I beheld,
" Coming towards me 'cross the neighbouring field:
" He said, ' My son, some perquisite bestow!
' Take pity on the wretch by want brought low!
' Though less the gift, with thanks I still accept—
' Me, but relieve!'—" he spoke, and loud he wept.
" I answer'd thus: Hear now! my words are true,
" I've nothing left to give to such as you;
" Without a doit I travel far and wide,
" My trifling wants are readily supplied.
" Had I the means, your cares I'd soon o'erturn;
" No more, poor soul, I'd suffer you to mourn;
" But, as it is, your craving suit suspend,
" Go whence you came, and seek a better friend."

'If that's the case,'—" 'twas so, I made reply,"
'Dismiss your grief, and stifle ev'ry sigh:
'I'll you adopt to cheer my life's decline,
'My ample store of riches shall be thine!—
'Nay, cease to laugh;—a beggar may have gold;
'And I'm the king of beggars, be it told.
'Come, follow me—you're worthy of my choice;
'And may your fortune cause you to rejoice!'
" In saying this, with speed he went away:
" I follow'd after through the new-mown hay,
" Recross'd the road, retrac'd the mellow field,
" To where the trees a vagrant gang conceal'd."
'See, here's my son!' " the kingly out-law cries;"
'He'll do whate'er my feeble strength denies;
'And by his schemes I pray you will abide,
'They'll be of use as often as they're tried.
'Of all you get a tythe he will receive,
'Worthy the counsel he'll e'er deign to give:

‘ His words observe, his voice as well regard,
‘ And sure success expect for your reward.’
“ The wond’ring crew to honour me agreed;
“ I gave them counsel how they should proceed;
“ Met at a wake, or neighb’ring village fair,
“ To beg relief, or levy plunder there.
“ With diff’rent washes, walnut-shells, and paint,
“ Sometimes the gang brown gipsies represent;
“ They’ll mark their limbs with angry ulcers sore;
“ And, like maim’d sailors, beg from door to door.
“ Meanwhile our chief grew daily worse and worse;
“ Within his tent he utter’d many a curse:
“ A hoary miscreant! miserable thing!
“ Not evil deeds will kindly comfort bring.
“ Late one dull morn the men abroad had sped,
“ He feebly calling, I ran near his bed:”
‘ Harry,’ said he, ‘ I feel I soon shall die;
‘ But never yet were wretch so loath as I!—

‘ Heard ye that voice?—the summons I obey:
‘ My glass is out!—now hark to what I say!
‘ While cold I lie, the tearful group you'll call,
‘ Divide my rags, and give a share to all:
‘ This old surtout, where patch on patch appear,
‘ Keep to yourself—my riches sav'd, lie here:
‘ Three thousand pounds, in notes and gold, you'll find
‘ Securely treasur'd in the seams behind.
‘ Alas! my son!—ah me!—what pangs of death!
‘ O God! forgive!'—“ he groan'd—resigns his breath.
“ Compassion for the dead assails my soul;
“ Fast down my cheeks my tears in torrents roll.
“ At night the gang, with heavy sobs, I call,
“ Divide the rags, and give a share to all.
“ The old surtout, where patch on patch appear,
“ I keep myself, for, sure, the treasure's here!
“ Within the seams I privately have told
“ Three thousand pounds, bank notes, and sterling gold:

" A tythe I claim of all the stock beside;
" And still I deign each vagrant's course to guide.
" Now come, young man, your grief to me confess;
" Explain the cause you suffer such distress:
" If worthy found, I'll fix you with my friends,
" And cheer your soul by what the king intends."
He spoke: our *Gilbert* thus to him replied:
" I crave excuse—nor more in me confide;
" For in these parts, unhappily, I rove,
" Unhappily o'ercome by stubborn love!
" Ah me! 'tis *Jenny* causes my dismay,
" Bends low my head—I'm grief's unwilling prey!
" The cruel maid, of whom I do complain,
" Inflicts new woes, and wakes the bitt'rest pain;
" Her lovely image fires my beating breast,
" Affects my senses, robs me of my rest:
" All day, all night, my torture knows no end;
" No hopes are left, but death, to stand my friend!

" Till then, I shall my sincere passion mourn,
" Plac'd on fair *Jane*, who makes me no return:
" Yet may she real happiness explore,
" And heights of bliss, when *Gilbert* is no more."
To whom the other this reply essay'd:
" Poor silly oaf! forget the scornful maid!
" Or fresh in mind her cruel scorn retain,
" And let your REASON meet her with disdain!
" Yet, hold!—the thing which I to you propose
" Too hard appears—pray nourish still your woes,
" Benumb your sense, your manly powers suspend,
" Create your goddess, and devoutly bend!
" I read your thoughts—I see what hurts your mind;
" There's no degree of spirit left behind:
" Unnerv'd, grown useless by your foolish love;
" Unfit to live, unfit to die, you prove.
" Go then, soft lad! or better would you choose
" To slumber here till morning dawn renews?

" Some disappointment in my schemes I feel;
" Yet what I've said you'll never dare reveal."
To which the sufferer could no more reply,
His bosom heaving many a far-fetch'd sigh:
Derision mark'd the king's contorted face,
When *Gilbert* hasted from the guilty place.
He on the road his course benighted steer'd,
And through a hedge beheld a stack late rear'd;
Beneath its welcome shelter down he lay,
Spent with fatigue, and slept till break of day.

GILBERT.

BOOK IV.

CANTO VII.

ARGUMENT.

Daybreak, &c. Discovery of the gipsy. History of Herbert and Mary-Ann. Gilbert undertakes to carry a letter; he loses himself in the fields. The robbers, &c. He prevents them from murdering a gentleman, whom he afterwards assists in returning home.

TIME. About seventeen hours are employed in the fourth book.

CANTO VII.

AGAIN 'tis morn—the sparrows, on the spray,
Proclaim their joy, and hail return of day:
Young *Gilbert* starts, his journey to renew,
And bids his airy lodging long adieu!
Soon o'er the meadow he attempts to pass,
Where crystal dew-drops shine the wav'ring grass;
Along the narrow-skirted path he hies;—
A strolling gipsy near a bank he spies:

Pensive his looks; a loaded box he bears,
Which resting down, his tatter'd coat he tears:
A rev'rend elm the verdant bank o'ershades;
Beneath its boughs he throws the ragged shreds:
In the clear stream bestowing well his pains,
Washes away the walnut-shell's brown stains,
Till health unfold a sweet complexion fair,
And good success reward his steady care.

Unseen stands *Gilbert*, peeping 'side the trees;
His wonder rises at the sight he sees:
Nor pow'r he feels, nor will from thence to go;
He, loitering, waits the end of this to know.
The gentle stranger brings his little box,
And o'er the stones the same he soon unlocks;
Takes out clean linen, suit of genteel clothes,
A modish hat, new shoes, fine silken hose.
Now full he's dress'd, he quits the lonely spot;
Still seems to waver where to shape his lot:

Along the grass his empty box he throws;
And, disencumber'd, o'er the meadow goes.
Swift *Gilbert* runs—the youth he overtakes,
Bids him good morn; he courteous answer makes;
His courteous answer question fresh supplies:
Well pleas'd they walk, discoursing, side by side:
But not on trifling subjects either dwell;
His cause for grief our lover comes to tell.
Young *Herbert* sighs; to pity him he deigns,
And the lorn wanderer's confidence he gains.
Here now in turn his story he relates;
Gilbert the more impatiently awaits:
Strange curiosity, unfelt before,
Excites the swain to hear th' eventful lore.
" Near thirty miles, whence yonder windmills stand,
" My sire's estate extends far o'er the land,
" A wealthy liquor-merchant still is he,
" And traffics largely o'er the distant sea.

" Far round about resounds his upright fame,
" While far and near the poor revere his name:
" His hand's e'er open to relieve distress;
" The blind of sight, the crippled lame, to bless.
" No anxious pains, no dear expense he spar'd,
" To make we worthier of his best regard:
" He vainly lavish'd all his kindest cares,
" And hop'd by me to crown his latter years.
" With nurse's help I'd scarcely learnt to run,
" Ere I gave signs of being a headstrong son:
" Grown up a dunce, good counsel to despise,
" And never heed my parents' groans and sighs.
" Alas! the heights of wickedness I knew,
" And day by day more lost to shame I grew:
" I scorn'd to follow REASON's golden rules,
" But stood a dupe to sundry knaves and fools.
" 'Twas then, by chance, I *Mary-Ann* beheld,
" Whose mental charms her outward form excell'd:

" Idalia's* son, his mighty power to prove,
" Let fly a shaft—I deeply fell in love!
" With passion warm'd, a suitor I became,
" Reform'd my faults, cherish'd the gen'rous flame,
" Bade all my old companions adieu,
" And like a lamb, in gentleness, soon grew.
" My father saw this change with wonder great;
" He blest the Power who had revers'd my fate!
" Approving thus the merit of my choice,
" And by his sanction did my heart rejoice.
" No cruel bar to foil my bliss I found;
" My happy lot rose envy all around;
" My cup with joy seem'd ready to run o'er,
" Intoxicating joy! unknown before.
" Our marriage-day was fix'd, alas! in vain;
" Misfortune frowning, left me to complain:
" A dire small-pox mischievously annoy'd
" Poor Mary-Ann;—her charms were all destroy'd.

* Cupid.

" Nor more of heaven in her eye appear'd;
" Nor more her finish'd excellence endear'd:
" I thought her robb'd of every mental grace,
" When I beheld destroy'd her lovely face.
" See! now, a slave of beauty all-divine,
" Bend with devotion at her sacred shrine,
" Weakly adoring outward charms, which fade;
" Nor reck'd that VIRTUE best adorns each maid.
" I cool became—the match was set aside;
" Lorn *Mary-Ann* took things to heart—she died!
" Her double loss—her beauty and my love,
" Caus'd pining grief a weight of ills to prove.
" Too late compassion touch'd my stubborn soul;
" Long for her sake my fruitless tears did roll.
" Oh! had she liv'd but to have been my bride,
" I'd sacrific'd in pity all my pride.
" Now, now, I mourn my cruelty unkind;
" Increasing anguish settles on my mind!

" Had I in time to comfort her but deign'd,
" I'd sav'd her life, and happiness obtain'd.
" Scarce spread the news ere I from home fast fled,
" Far o'er the wilds a trackless course I sped;
" Three tedious months with gipsies I have liv'd,
" And day and night for *Mary-Ann* I've griev'd.
" Alas! alas!—sure every care is mine,
" That wrings the soul, and leaves us to repine!
" For thee, young man, methinks 'tis not amiss
" To turn thy thoughts on future scenes of bliss:
" *Jane* yet will love, joy yet thy steps await;
" And peace, attendant, bless thy humble state!"
Concluding thus, he wipes the starting tear:
Gilbert would speak; but MANSFIELD town is near:
Where the green dragon shapes a striking sign,
Appears the inn for porter, ale, and wine!
Pensive the friends conclude their fast to break,
Nor further for a baiting place they'll seek:

On nice hot roll, rich toasted cheese, fine ale,
In parlour snug, like travellers, regale.
With hearts refresh'd, they on their journey go,
Passing the lane, the northern road below;
Where, rais'd conspicuous by each shelving side,
Deep graven stones the space in miles divide:
There sev'ral rough-wrought characters they read,
Bend on their way, and try their utmost speed.
Shame to that man, who injur'd, in his rage,
The guiding-post, or mile-stone, near the hedge,
Merely to vex the weary wandering wight,
And mock the doubtful stranger's anxious sight!
Far on the road th' ungracious wretch has been,
The dints of mischief on each stone are seen;
The letter'd board defac'd, no more descries
The town, or points how far the distance lies.

Here *Herbert* sigh'd—to speak he thus began:
" Now, while we walk, I'll tell you what I plan:

" I'm tir'd with rambling, homewards I'll return,
" Nor more my father for my sake shall mourn.
" But, once to judge how things are like to go,
" First what he means concerning me I'll know;
" If to forgive my faults he's yet inclin'd,
" I'll better be, nor more afflict his mind.
" Three miles this side of LOUGHBRO' is seen
" A modern building on the rising green;
" Safe wall'd with brick, white rails are fix'd around,
" The fragrant woodbines grace the gravell'd ground.
" Oblige me, *Gilbert*, by one favour kind;
" Carry my letter, and the merchant find:
" Dwell on his action when he turns to read;
" Observe it well—there rests my fate indeed!
" With kind concern to what he wills, attend;
" Make known my grief—'tis what I now unbend;
" Do, *Gilbert*, say, how much your friend laments
" His num'rous faults, and heartily repents."

The other heard, then with a smile replied:
" All this I'll do, and thank you, sir, beside;
" Gratefully bound, by this convincing proof
" Of your regard for a poor hapless youth!
" With woe oppress'd—o'erbearing, stubborn, woe;
" 'Tis all as one whichever way I go;
" From place to place unsettled still I move;
" And, while I travel, mourn my slighted love.
" Your letter safely to your sire I'll speed,
" Dwell on his action when he turns to read,
" With due concern to what he wills attend,
" Make known your sorrows, and your griefs unbend:
" Nor doubt but he to answer kind will deign;
" He'll pardon all, receive his son again.
" Thus I, for once, a little joy shall have,
" Ere my misfortunes bring me to my grave."
To whom young *Herbert* answer'd in these words:
" Your kind assurance better thoughts affords;

" O! if my father peace to me restore,
" Believe your friend—I'll let you mourn no more!
" A thriving farm on that blest day I'll buy,
" Which you shall rent on terms not over high;
" Your lovely *Jane* your constant spouse shall be,
" And trouble cease to bear its weight on thee.
" Cheer up, dear *Gilbert!* mark the words I say,
" Coming from friendship, which you must obey;
" A mite from my inheritance I'll give,
" And thou with *Jenny* happily long live."
" Thanks, gen'rous HERBERT!" *Gilbert* quickly said,
While every look his gratitude betray'd;
" Thanks, gen'rous HERBERT!—I the gift refuse,
" Which, to accept, your friendship 'twould abuse.
" Had I, indeed, of wealth a kingly store,
" I still should think I'd reason to deplore!
" Had I been born estates to call my own,
" *Jenny* had lov'd me for their sake alone!

" Here drives the thorn!—it makes me more distress'd—
" It wounds my heart—it robs me of all rest:
" Were I but wealthy, *Jenny* kind would prove;
" But humble *Gilbert* she disdains to love."

Discoursing thus, twelve tedious miles they pass'd,
And came below the hollow'd rocks at last;
Far in the distance stands a row of mills,
Along the border of the forest hills;
Where tufts of gorse, with yellow blossoms crown'd,
Wide variegate the upland rising ground:
Full many a sluggish jack-ass steals abroad,
To crop the thistle, growing near the road.
Slow up the path, the friends their way pursue;
The cavern'd houses strike their prying view,
Till bearing down to NOTTINGHAM they come,
And hear the crash of many a lumb'ring loom.

The higher folk in stately halls reside;
The streets are pav'd, the market well supplied:

Pale manufacture bears the town a name,
Its PATENT LACE and stockings speak its fame.
Industry points the certain means of *Gain*,
While COMMERCE sends her labours o'er the main,
Contrasting still, her riches' fair increase,
With rags and filth, the fruits of idleness.

Now walk they fast, nor make the least delay,
Aside the church with speed pursue their way;
The Bridge-Foot House attracts attention best,
Within they go, their weary limbs to rest.
On boil'd plumb-pudding, nice roast beef, they dine:
The landlord call'd, he brings his choicest wine:
How nice the fare!—the lover scarce can find
A will to eat—affliction rends his mind.

Here HERBERT writes, his sorrows he reveals;
He folds the note, which carefully he seals:
The bill discharg'd, their journey they renew,
Till noble TRENT extends before their view:

Nor long the scenes their ling'ring steps assail,
The castle rock, the lowland level vale,
The far-fam'd grove of Clifton, which inspir'd
Our White* to sing, with heavenly numbers fir'd.
Across the bridge their steps they onward bend;
And though quite weary, strive their pace to mend;
Or by the slope, or nigh the heavy rise,
Full many a mile-stone strikes their eager eyes.

Arriv'd at Bunny, *Herbert* thus began:

" Here will I wait the issue of my plan:
" See where yon signpost meets the passing sight,
" The village inn I'll make my home to-night.
" Four miles from hence, the left side of the road,
" You'll not mistake the merchant's fair abode:
" Hear the description which I gave before,
" Its front is stone; its height, a second floor;
" White rails o'ertop the walls of brick around,
" And tufted trees adorn the gravell'd ground.

* Henry Kirke White, of Nottingham.

" Soon to my father you'll my letter give—
" View well his look—oh! may he it receive:
" If things go well, inform him where I wait,
" And in the morn convince me of my fate."
He ceas'd: the letter in his hand he took,
Gave it to *Gilbert*, who, replying, spoke:
" Amidst of ills some better things remain;
" Friendship has power to banish far my pain.
" Here rest at ease the while direct I go,
" With heart of zeal to dissipate your woe:
" I'll to your father, all your cares unfold,
" Speak your repentance, speak your grief of soul.
" Then quick returning, whether wrong or right,
" I'll bring you word, your good will to requite."
So saying, they shake hands, and silent part:
Fresh hopes inspire young *Herbert's* grateful heart;
His inn he seeks, the better cheer he tries,
While lovelorn *Gilbert* on his journey hies.

How fast he walks! he's on big errand sent;
Eager he feels to know the great event:
No more his close attention he bestow'd
On varying sights along the dusty road.
Three several mile-stones *Gilbert* quickly pass'd:
Meeting a stile to crown his zeal at last,
This way to go he thinks less time will need;
Across he steps, his errand more to speed;
Runs up the hill, then down the valley flies,
Till night's dark shadows overspread the skies.
Alarm'd, he hurries o'er the dismal green;
No passage through the banded hedge is seen:
The treacherous path at length, by slow degrees,
Leads wide astray;—another road he sees:
A different cut some high rails terminate;
He stands confus'd; he mourns his folly late—
Poor hapless youth! 'twere wrong the track to leave,
A fault which gave him greater cause to grieve.

The moon up risen, he perceives he's lost:
He spies two paths, one o'er the other cross'd:
Which shall he choose? no fav'ring sprite reveals;
He's chosen wrong—it leads him in the fields!
Here stands the youth unknowing what to do;
No wandering rustic comes within his view,
Of whom to ask, haply to find once more
The certain road he quit in evil hour.
Low droops his head: his spirits 'gin to fail!
When, lo! a cry for help, resounds the vale;
A dreadful cry—louder the noise repeats;
Poor *Gilbert's* breast with consternation beats.
Again a shriek!—he runs with sudden speed
Towards the spot from whence the cries proceed:
Close to the wall four of the ruffian crew,
Dragging some man to murder, come in view:
A·piteous scene! it gives him mortal pain!
His feeble strength to master four, how vain!

Prudence his better courage will befriend;
He schemes a plan, whate'er may be the end:
Without delay takes off his upper coat;
He holds it out, then hastens to the spot:
Shouts, "Here they are! up, friends, we have them all!"
The frighten'd cowards scamper o'er the wall:
Guilt strikes their conscience, feeling sore afraid,
With speed they haste across the heavy glade,
In fancy picturing, by the moon's pale light,
A crowd well arm'd to intercept their flight.

Meanwhile our *Gilbert* runs to the poor swain,
Prone-lying, trembling on the skirted plain.
He lifts him up, and kindly looking, said,
"Take courage! see, the wicked rogues have fled!
"Accept the ready offer of my hand:
"I'll guide you safe where'er you give command:
"Happy it chanc'd, that timely here I came,
"To disappoint the villains in their aim."

To whom the stranger: " Sir, my life you've sav'd,
" And gratitude has deeply *this* engrav'd;
" But still I feel your offer'd help I need,
" To bear my frame, enfeebled, o'er the mead.
" 'Tis scarce one furlong from yon chalky mound,
" Where my house stands upon a rising ground;
" Whence, for the future, I'll avoid with care,
" Coming alone to take the evening air."

These few words spoken, their return they haste
Across the meadow, field, and wintery waste;
Nor more molested, they their course pursue,
Till close at hand the king's highway they view.

GILBERT.

BOOK IV.

CANTO VIII.

ARGUMENT.

The stranger rescued from the robbers discovers himself to be the father of Herbert. Gilbert meets with unexpected condolence; his interview, &c. Jenny confesses her affection; she clears up to him the singularity of her former deportment. His excessive joy, &c. The gratitude of the gentleman towards Gilbert for having saved his life. Conclusion.

TIME. About seventeen hours are employed in the fourth book.

CANTO VIII.

YOUNG *Gilbert* blest his well rewarded toil,
And thank'd the power that led him o'er the stile;
He'd been the means, through Providence divine,
To save from ruffian fury some poor hind.
The road they pass'd; our *Gilbert* did inquire
Where stood the house of *Herbert's* wealthy sire?
His new companion answers, with a sigh,
" 'Tis that we seek;—a father once was I!

" Ah! brave young man, say why this anxious strain?
" Why ask the question? will you kind explain?
" I'd once a son, by fortune led to roam—
" Alas! he went, three months ago, from home!
" Now stubborn grief, which still my soul assails,
" Leads me to walk 'midst solitary vales;
" Or, on the rocks, to mourn my son's hard fate,
" Or 'side the stream, lamenting, early, late.
" Where solitude asserts her solemn sway,
" Where, unmolested, brood the birds* of prey,
" Oft have I seen, at eve, the sun decline,
" His streaks of gold, his cloud-assemblage shine,
" Till sudden anguish seiz'd upon my soul,
" And ceaseless tears in mighty torrents roll.
" Ah! might I hear where *Herbert* could be trac'd,
" Weak as I am, I'd try my steps to haste;
" His faults, though num'rous, freely I'd forgive;
" He'd comfort me what few years I've to live."

* The kites.

He ceas'd; nor knew that each succeeding word,
To lovelorn *Gilbert* did fresh joy afford;
The whole adventure dwells upon the sense,
It is the ordering of wise Providence.
Just as he'd shap'd an answer in reply,
The wish'd-for building strikes his eager eye;
Th' afflicted sire unlocks the garden gate,
The liveried servants round the portal wait.
Poor *Gilbert* meets their looks of bitter scorn;
His manner humble, and his garb forlorn;
But soon experienced a better fate,
When each one heard what did their lord relate:
" He's sav'd my life!"—the words like lightning fly;
Th' attendants often, to themselves, thus cry:
" A vent'rous act indeed! how bravely done!
" The merchant will adopt him for his son!"
What scraping, cringing, what insidious lore,
To catch a smile!—his pardon they implore;

Happy they feel, who e'en a word obtain
From the late object of their proud disdain.

But *Gilbert* now young *Herbert's* sire address'd,
Him to console, and ease his troubled breast:
" Good news I bring; much pleasure may it give,
" Know, that your son, whom you lament, does live!
" I've left him, sir, at Bunny, while I came,
" To bring his letter."—He presents the same.
The parent, warm with rapture, breaks the seal,
And, overjoy'd, reads what the lines reveal.
Gilbert he styles his guardian, best of friends,
While for his son his carriage quick he sends;
Along the road the lash is heard to sound,
The horses fly, and light the wheels run round.

Meanwhile poor *Gilbert*, close requested, tells
His own true tale—on *Jenny's* hate he dwells;
In either eye reveals the glistening tears,
And full of trouble and concern appears.

His friend beholds with marks of new surprise,
And bids him cease his heavy groans and sighs;
Abrupt began: " 'Twas you that sav'd my life;
" And, in return, fair *Jane* shall be your wife!
" Look not amaz'd, but hear what I express:—
" *Jenny*, your fav'rite, my best servant is;
" My old housekeeper for a season hir'd
" The maiden's service you've so long admir'd;
" Herself she's well acquitted, just and true,
" And her affection's surely fix'd on you.
" A 'squire's devoirs she lately did withstand,
" E'en to my steward she's refus'd her hand!
" Some youth she loves, young *Gilbert* call'd by name,
" And what you say evinces you're the same.
" I'll ring the bell fair *Jenny* to accite,
" And may you bring the matter clearly right!
" If to your hopes the lovely girl's inclin'd,
" Henceforth in me you both a friend shall find."

He spoke: applying to the bell his hand,
Soon *Jenny* comes to wait on his command;
He leaves the parlour—*Gilbert* meets her eyes,
Her cheeks turn pale, tumultuous thoughts arise:
The sudden shock with joy distracts anew,
Confus'd she waits; nor wist she what to do;
Kind on the youth she casts a tender smile,
That well repays his suff'ring, pain, and toil.
" Alas!" he cries, " such bliss I ne'er shall know!
" Here seems a dream to aggravate my woe.
" How hard my fate!—my breast heaves many a sigh;
" What hopes are left for such a wretch as I?
" Ah! say you love!—my heart with rapture beat;
" Dear *Jenny*, make my happiness complete!
" With kinder pity view my doleful state:
" Ah! say you love! or seal my cruel fate!"
The fair one hears, and, *Gilbert* more to bless.
In softer strain her passion does confess;

Gently she blames her lover all forlorn,
Whose ill-tim'd flight had caus'd her long to mourn.
With smiles benign, to *Gilbert* thus she cries,
" Fond youth! forbear; no longer heave your sighs:
" If *Jane* is lov'd, mistaken cares dismiss,
" Hush ev'ry grief, and bid affliction cease!
" Ah me! what joy enraptur'd my young heart,
" When from the door I mark'd the tilted cart!
" Pleas'd at your stay to tell my father news,
" I've made believe the cleanly broom to use;
" My sidelong glance appear'd quite lost on you,
" But still I thought your passion kind and true;
" And fondly hop'd you'd follow through the gate,
" When in the garden I was led to wait.
" But, through mischance, you left me to deplore,
" Upbraid my foolish folly o'er and o'er;
" Cry at the gifts which you so kindly brought,
" And blame myself for being so much in fault.

" Know too, dear *Gilbert*, you're the only swain
" For whom my heart e'er felt a secret pain:
" Continue still your *Jenny* to adore,
" And she will cruel prove to you no more!"
To which the lover answers, wild with joy,
" Sure this is *Jane*, and not deceiv'd am I!
" What rich reward awaits my stubborn toil!
" Relenting fortune deigns on me to smile.
" Adieu, ye fields! ye mountains, vales, and groves!
" 'Midst solitude no longer *Gilbert* roves!
" Fate now allots to him a paradise,
" While hopes of bliss, to know no change, arise
" Say, will dear *Jane* consent to be my bride,
" Dwell in a cot, and share all I provide?
" Will *Jane* agree with *Gilbert* poor to live,
" And good or ill, as Heaven may send, receive?
" O! then I'm blest, supremely blest indeed!
" And take from hence the best, the highest meed."

To whom with smiles th' enchanting fair replies,
" Nor more will I my sentiments disguise;
" But own the truth—young *Gilbert* I approve,
" Who for my sake could solitary rove.
" How much I've suffer'd for my false disdain,
" Were strange to tell,—yet things come right again;
" *Jenny* consents to be her *Gilbert's* bride,
" And share the good or ill that may betide."
" Success attend!" the list'ning master cries;
" I'd fain approach, to bid new joys arise;
" The hero brave, who sav'd my life, to crown,
" And fix him high above the world's hard frown.
" A farm well stock'd, you, *Gilbert*, will receive,
" Likewise to *Jane* one thousand pounds I'll give:
" Accept this scroll, to which my hand I've set,
" And hence be your felicity complete."
So saying, from his vest the deeds he takes:
The youth beholds, and thus rejoinder makes;

" Ah, sir! your goodness more and more I see,
" And thank you kind for gifts bestow'd on me.
" Fair from your hands, sweet *Jane* becomes my bride;
" Can I with her crave wealth, or aught beside?
" Yet, if you please, I heartily assent,
" The well-stock'd farm on moderate terms to rent;
" Since you've a son who is indeed my friend,
" And with your gift our friendship e'er might end—
" Forgive me, sir!—the present I refuse,
" Which to receive, your friendship 'twould abuse:
" Here nothing more I dare accept from you,
" To whom my gratitude's already due."

When now young *Herbert* suddenly appears;
He'd just arriv'd--our *Gilbert's* words he hears:
Prone at his parent's feet himself he throws,
And gushing tears declare his inward woes.
" Look o'er my faults, dear father!" he began,
" And from this hour I'll ne'er offend again!

" Look o'er my faults—a duteous son I'll be,
" And RECTITUDE shall henceforth dwell with me!"
" Welcome, my hopes!" the aged parent cries;
" I pardon all, and blessings grant besides;
" You like the *Prodigal* restor'd become,
" Ease and contentment still to find at home.
" Let no harsh strife your future peace assail,
" Nor passion o'er your judgment more prevail;
" A settled calm on all your thoughts await,
" Cool to determine and deliberate.
" From late experience much you may have gain'd,
" Better to strive your conduct to amend.
" The plan of life nice principles requires;
" Good wholesome counsel combats bad desires.
" But my lov'd son in *Herbert* I behold,
" And look'd-for joys before my face unfold;
" Joys which no careful sorrows shall impede,
" Kind as they come affliction to succeed.

" Still to this youth how much does *Herbert* owe!
" He shielded me, braving the mortal blow!
" Lone in the fields I chanc'd this eve to stray;
" His courage made the murderers haste away:
" He sav'd my life—'tis mine to heap rewards;
" But what I'd freely give, he disregards:
" He fears the gentle *Herbert* 'twould offend;
" Foregoes the farm, to keep him still his friend."
" Respected father!" soon the son replies,
" Within my mind all troubling care subsides:
" Again restor'd to your parental love,
" Whate'er you do I cannot but approve:
" Yet for the youth a friendship kind I feel,
" I'd promis'd him in part what you reveal;
" Since which, defending he your sacred life,
" His be the farm, and *Jane* his faithful wife."
At which young *Gilbert* his discourse renews:
" The goodly gift I'll now no more refuse:

" I'm truly blest!—dear *Herbert*, see the fair!
" Behold sweet *Jane*, who caus'd my anxious care!
" Oh! by her love my rapture bears a date!
" Crown'd with your friendship, happy is my fate!
" For me there's real happiness in store,
" And sorrow flies my presence evermore."

Thus clouds and storms obscure the sun's warm ray,
Dwell on the light, and dull the face of day;
Just for a time the gloomy shroud may last,
Till the hot beam reflects a brighter cast;
Serene's the sky, all NATURE shines more fair;
Th' unwelcome vapour vanishes in air.

THE END.

ALPHABETICAL CATALOGUE

OF

NAMES, PLANTS, FLOWERS, FRUITS, BIRDS, BEASTS, INSECTS,

And other material Things mentioned in the four Books of this Poem.

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THE

CONSOLATIONS

OF

ERIN:

AN EULOGY.

DEDICATED, BY PERMISSION, TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE REGENT.

BY

CHARLES PHILLIPS, A. B.

AND OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE;

AUTHOR OF "THE LOVES OF CELESTINE AND ST. AUBERT," A ROMANTIC TALE.

Oh mihi tam longæ maneat pars ultima vitæ,
Spiritus et, quantum sat erit tua dicere facta!

VIRGIL'S POLLIO.

THE THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

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1811.

TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE PRINCE: REGENT.

SIR,

When I first conceived the ambition of dedicating to you the following lines, I did so rather from my respect for your private virtues than your public station; and the condescension with which you granted the request of one so humble as myself, proves that the world had not exaggerated the one, and may hope to derive a blessing from the other.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your Royal Highness's

Most obliged and devoted servant,

CHARLES PHILLIPS.

June 19, 1811.

PREFACE.

TO so very brief a Poem, as that which is now presented to the Public, perhaps a Preface may be thought by many ostentatious, and, by more, unnecessary. Custom, however, must shield me from the one charge; and, I trust, the explanation into which I am about to enter, will obviate the other. It is now about a fortnight since every man of common gratitude or common sense was shocked and surprised by an assertion, that Ireland was "a burthen upon this country." Strange as the declaration is, still, however, it was hazarded, and remains upon record, the solitary memorial of its author's eloquence, and sufficient specimen of his political sagacity. To either him who uttered, or him who could listen to such a calumny, I shall address no argument; because I have too little vanity to suppose I can convince

prejudice, and too much to squander my time upon stupidity. To the liberal and the thinking, there is offered in the following pages, an imperfect summary of Ireland's benefactions, not only to England, but the world — benefactions which will perpetuate to future times and distant people, the glory of the nation which received and which bestowed them. I feel a pride in my native land, which, however enhanced, is not solely created, by the partiality of patriotism. Ireland rests upon her merits, and they, like her lovely mountains, are too firm to be shaken by the effort, too vast to be measured by the eye, of envy. While painting can delight the eye, philosophy inform the heart, or poetry enchain the fancy; while nature can charm by her simplicity, or virtue attract by her worth, Irishmen may boast of their native Isle, and she will blush for her foreign slanderers.

No. 1, Duke Street, Adelphi,
London.

THE

CONSOLATIONS OF ERIN:

AN EULOGY.

Erin! dear by every tie
Which binds us to our infancy,
By weeping Memory's fondest claims,
By Nature's holiest, highest names,
By the sweet potent spell that twines
The Exile's secret heart around,
By woe and distance faster bound,
When for his native soil he pines,

As, wafted o'er the clouded deep,
And shuddering at the tempest's roar,
He thinks how sweet its waters sleep
Upon thy lone and lovely shore:
By the indignant Patriot's tear,
Oh! even by misfortune dear—
ERIN, from thy living tomb
Arise—the hour of hope is come.
Think on what thou once hast been,
Think on many a glorious scene
Which grac'd thy hills and vallies green;
Think on MALACHI the brave,
Look on BRIAN's verdant grave.
Rise, visions of our golden age,
And flash your glories on my page—

Rise, ancient heroes of our isle,
And cheer your country with a smile—
Rise, shades of the departed years—
Rise, sages, bards, and holy seers—
USHER, SWIFT, and FARQUHAR, come
From your star-encircled home.
See, see, the vision passing by;
See how it glows along the sky—
A grand, eternal galaxy!
Poor ERIN! though surrounding night
May make that galaxy more bright,
Still hast thou hope some happy star
Will lead in Morning's lucid car;
For even in this moment drear,
Such splendid prodigies appear,

That one must think their heavenly ray
The promise of returning day.

See thy laurel-circled son
Leading crimson Conquest on—
See how India comes from far,
And looks on Lusitania's war—
See how she waves her banner proud,
And claps her hands, and cries aloud,
"Yield, Europe, half his fame to me;
I nurs'd the child of victory."—

Happy chief! upon whose head
Contending climes their honours shed!
Happy chief! whose sword has won
A title, nobler than a throne—
The nation-saving WELLINGTON!

And does not he—oh! write the name
In characters of living flame—
Does not SHERIDAN refuse
The wreath of every stranger muse,
Bringing, with filial love, to thee,
The glories of his poverty?
Still showing others Wisdom's way,
Still led himself, by wit, astray;
Of contradictions so combin'd,
With views so brilliant, yet so blind,
That, in him, error looks like truth,
Folly is reason, age is youth.
Immortal man! design'd to be
The country's own epitome!
When thy keen flashes set no more
The midnight table in a roar,

Sages and wits alike shall come,
To heap the garlands on thy tomb,
And every weeping muse, in turn,
Clasp in her arms her fav'rite's urn—
E'en from that urn shall rise relief,
Glory will so illumine grief:
Thus, when the radiant orb of day
Sheds on the world its parting ray,
The lustre all creation cheers,
And orphan Nature smiles in tears.

Nor, GRATTAN, mayst thou stand aside,
When ERIN counts her cause of pride:
Thou, thou, who in her darkest night
Rose like a meteor on her sight,
When a *native traitor's* blow
Laid thy lovely ERIN low.

Oh! round that last ill-omen'd field,
Where her high heart was forc'd to yield,
When, in its wrath, the midnight cloud
Roll'd its thunder-laden shroud,
Burning through storm and cloud, thy beam
Shot on her eye a loftier gleam,
Cheer'd her sunk heart, and bid her feel,
That virtue might be conqueror still.
E'en when the remnant of the fight,
Her warriors scorning chains or flight,
Though dim their spear and cleft their shield,
Hung on the limits of the field;
They watch'd upon the cloud afar,
The radiance of thy guiding star—
Radiance so grand, so pure, 't was given
To brighten earth and show them heaven—

That heaven, KIRWAN, which sent thee
On earth to show its purity,
But which, enamour'd of thy tongue,
Refus'd the blessing to us long;
And Virtue now holds out to men
The hope of hearing thee again.
Apostle! worthy of thy God!
Like him, a thorny path you trod *,

* KIRWAN—"the glory of the priesthood and the shame."—The powers of this amazing man were so transcendent, that when he preached, it was found necessary to surround the church with an armed force, in order to guard against the impatient multitudes which assembled to hear him. In the course of his divine mission, he obtained in the cause of charity above 60,000*l.* and at length fell a victim to his great and continued exertion. I remember, when in college, meeting the funeral of Kirwan; it was attended by the children of every charity-school in Dublin, and a sad sight it was, to see the widow and the fatherless, with bleeding hearts, in the procession of their de-

Shedding thine high and holy grace
Upon a worthless, thankless race!
Blush, mitred Dulness! blush with shame,
At KIRWAN's great, neglected name.

parted benefactor. Those who are acquainted with the usual routine of church preferment, will not be surprised to hear, that, after a long probation of poverty, this inspired genius was *rewarded by a deanery of* 500l. *a year in a miserable fishing village in Ireland.* Paul *preached in the wilderness.* The distance, however, from his more dignified brethren was very *convenient.* "Had he (said Mr. Grattan in the Irish House of Commons), had he, been the pampered menial of a venal court, he might have been a Bishop; but the curse of Swift was upon him—*he was a man of genius, and an Irishman.*"—*The curse of Swift* has since become a proverb. There are many "men of genius" now starving in the Irish church: even Doctor MAGEE, the author of the very learned work on the *atonement*, has been shamefully neglected; a man, who has illustrated the Gospel, not less by the exertions of a vigorous mind, than by the example of a virtuous life.

But who is here with olive crown'd,
With Echo, listening for a sound,
And all the passions bending round:
Ecstatic Mirth, and stern Despair,
Owning alike their master there?
Whose is the wonder-working wand,
That conjures up the shadowy band—
Bids sorrow, shame, and rapture, start
From the recesses of the heart;
Calls the quick tear to joy's blue eye,
Alternate wakes the smile and sigh—
And reigns, with sweet and proud control,
Unrivall'd sovereign of the soul?
CURRAN! now I know thee well—
I know thee by thy potent spell;

But hence, without applause from me—
I must not worship witchery.

See, see, who comes with careless measure,
Looking bliss, and breathing pleasure;
Led along by Beauty's choir,
With heart of feather, tongue of fire,
A Cupid carrying his lyre!
'T is he, the bard of voice divine,
Sweet melodist of love and wine;
He, on whom monks and minions rail,
The Muse's little nightingale:—
Yes, Erin, 't is thy patriot son,
Thy simple, sweet Anacreon!

Take the lyre, thou child of song!
But keep it not from Cupid long:

Yet can the god of love refuse
A moment of his darling muse,
To celebrate a land, which pays
To him such pure and pious praise?
To celebrate in deathless strain,
Its honour, without spot or stain—
Its spirit brave, its social glee,
Its beauteous hospitality—
Its fire, and mirth, and martial fame,
Concentred all in MOIRA's name!
Yes, if in human hearts there be
A symbol of the Deity,
A feeling of celestial birth,
Which raises man above the earth—
Ennobles life, and death defies,
And wings our spirit for the skies—

Moira, 'tis that which gives to thee
The patriot's immortality—
It lends thy star a ray more bright,
Sheds on thy name a purer light,
And gives thee, more than wit or birth,
The meed of honesty and worth;
In faith, it glads my heart to say,
That, even in thy winter day,
There is a patriot, pure and free,
To think, poor Erin! upon thee—
To sweep, with angel hand, aside
The lures of luxury and pride:
And, great in all the world can give,
Alone for thee contented live:
Yet, Erin, few there surely are,
And, oh! be these from memory far,

Who do not love to think on thee,
And all the joys of infancy!
No matter where the exile goes,
O'er sultry sands, or Alpine snows,
Or where no mortal foot before
Had dar'd the desert to explore;
Where wild tornadoes pour their wrath,
Or serpents hiss along his path.
At night, when, wearied and alone,
He rests upon the shapeless stone,
E'en on that broken hour of sleep
Delicious thoughts of home will sweep,
And his sooth'd spirit give a tear
To all that charm'd and sooth'd it there;
The hazel wood, the village green,
Of all his boyish sports the scene—

The woodbine bower, the hawthorn glade,
Where first he met his mountain maid,
With all the loves of that sweet soil,
Where friendship gave a charm to toil,
And Mirth lent Poverty a smile.

Dear native land! though distant now
The days, when o'er thy mountain's brow,
With footstep light, and spirit gay,
I brush'd the morning dew away;
Or paus'd to mark the rural grave,
Where sleep the ashes of the brave—
Still, ever dear shall be the scene,
Though savage oceans roll between;
Still shalt thou be my midnight dream,
Thy glory still my waking theme;

And ev'ry thought and wish of mine,
Still, lovely Erin, shall be thine!
Oh! had I but the envied power
To sing thy brighter, earlier hour!
Then would I sing the happy day
Which saw thee reign with regal sway:
Then would I sing thine age of gold,
Thy virgins bright, and heroes bold;
And ev'ry trump should sound their fame,
And ev'ry tongue should bless their name,
And ev'ry flower should droop its head,
And on their tomb its odour shed.

But to no human tongue 'tis given
To use the privilege of Heaven.
Celestial beings chaunt their dirge,
The syrens sing it on the surge;

It makes the winds of heaven to sigh,
So sweet and sad its melody.
When evening comes on pinion grey,
To weep for the departed day,
The spirits of an higher sphere
Are sent by the Immortal here:
They come, a seraph choir, to mourn
Upon the hero's laurell'd urn;
And so unearthly is their song,
The peasant, as he goes along,
Invents a thousand marvels dire,
To tell around his rustic fire—
He tells of many an elfin fay
He saw amid the moonbeams play,
Or shooting through the midnight gloom
To guard the slumbers of the tomb!

But yet not sprung from terror pale
Is that poor peasant's simple tale;
For if you rise ere early morn,
Or Echo hears the hunter's horn,
The sylvan landscape will appear
Glistening with many a dewy tear—
The tears, which angel eyes have shed
In sorrow for the sacred dead.
But to see the hallow'd sight,
You must steal an hour from night;
For so divine the dews which grace
The hero's sacred resting-place,
That when the sun, with vision bright,
Beholds them glittering in the light,
He sends, by Heaven's own desire,
A ray of his celestial fire,

To kiss the heath-bell's weeping cup,
And drink the pearly odour up.

Yet, GOLDSMITH! Orpheus of the wild,
Nature's own darling village child,
Could but a patriot prayer of mine
Draw thy sweet spirit from its shrine,
Then might I wake the mournful tone,
And angels think it was their own.
Then, BURKE, should thy immortal form
Arise, majestic, 'mid the storm;
As when fair Justice saw thee stand,
With client nations at thy hand,
While wealth, and rank, and beauty, hung
Upon the magic of thy tongue!

Oh! 't was a noble sight, to see
How talent shadow'd pedigree *.
And thou, poor orphan of the sod,
Prov'd thy nobility from God!

And, BERKELEY, thou in vision fair,
With all the spirits of the air,
Shouldst come to see, beyond dispute,
Thy deathless page thyself refute,
And in it, own that thou couldst view
Matter, and it, immortal too.

And Wit, and Comedy, and Love,
Should come with CONGREVE from above—

* ——Tamen īma plebe Quiritum
Facundum invenies: solet hic defendere causas
Nobilis indocti: veniet de plebe togata
Qui juris nodos et legum ænigmata solvat.

JUVENAL SAT. VIII.

And Swift *, the wonder of the age:
Statesman, yet patriot—priest, yet sage—
Who sought the mob, admir'd the crown,
And sham'd the church, yet grac'd the gown!
Impassion'd without love or fear;
Witty, yet solemn and severe:
So much at war his word and deed,
Antithesis was still his creed;
And sure the life must love inspire,
Where all find something to admire:
Fond of the nation he disown'd,
Still on her hour of hope he frown'd;

* A doubt has been attempted to be cast upon the birth-place of Swift; but an account, written *by himself*, and now to be seen in the manuscript library of Dublin University, puts the question at rest. He there says, he was born in Dublin.

But when her hour of struggle came,
And IRELAND half embrac'd her shame,
Then was *his* hour:—the champion rose,
Terror alike of friends and foes;
Unarm'd, save in the mighty zeal
His country forc'd his heart to feel;
In shame, and pride, and sorrow strong,
The scornful patriot rush'd along,
Like lightning on the slumberer's eyes,
Flashing his glorious energies—
Nor did the noble ardour die,
Till IRELAND could her foes defy,
And its last fierce, indignant ray,
Vanish'd amid the blaze of day:
Then, then his native soul return'd,
And e'en the soil he sav'd, he spurn'd!

To friendship and to feeling dear,
Immortal STERNE should appear,
With Cupid gaily running after,
Encircled in a myrtle crown,
And cover'd with a cleric gown,
The jest of jollity and laughter.
Thou, magic SPENSER * ! shouldst be seen,
Ranging the fairies on the green,
To tell them how, one winter night,
When moon and stars refus'd their light,
And not a sprite could vigil keep,
You stole upon their sovereign's sleep,

* A vulgar error has gone abroad, that Spenser was an Englishman. In his "Fairie Queen" he calls himself "the softer childe" of Irelande; and the peasantry still show in the south of that country, the little cottage in which he wrote his beautiful poem.

And took a wand of wonder dread,
Which gave a charm to all you said!
  Woo'd from his silent, rustic tomb,
The shade of CAROLAN should come:
And see his harp of music hung
  Upon some hoary hawthorn tree,
And hear the little robin's tongue
  Learning its plaintive melody:
While every warbler brings its young,
To hear the lovely vesper sung,
And round the choir the fairies play,
And dance their magic roundelay—
Till the last breath of parting Even,
  Sweet and slowly floating by,
Carries the concert up to heaven,
  All fragrance and all harmony.

Soft as the murmuring winds that shake
The dew-drop from the woodbine spray,
Soft as the airs that stir the lake
At the rich, solemn close of day,
Is CAROLAN's* bewitching lay.
But cease, my soul, the effort vain,
Nor venture such a sacred strain;

* Carolan was the Orpheus of the peasant's festival: some of his sweetest airs appear in the Irish melodies, and have been "married to immortal verse" by the inimitable Anacreon Moore. Carolan was, in Ireland, what the *improvisatores* are in Italy. There is an extempore epigram by him, which tradition has handed down, that may give some idea of his ready and caustic satire. In one of his rural excursions, he called at a house where he had been always received with the proverbial expression of Irish hospitality; the *ceadth milha foiltha—an hundred thousand welcomes.* The master of the mansion was unfortunately absent, and a "pampered menial," called O'Flynn, drove

Yet, O my country! could I throw
One gleam of comfort on thy woe,
The holy solace should be heard,
Though fate itself should wing the word.
Dear country! if my counsel light,
A shepherd's whistle in the night,
Might gain a reverence from thee,
Though but for its sincerity,
I'd tell thy injur'd, honour'd land,
In patient dignity to stand.
But, oh! from thee and thine be far
The rashness of a rebel war!

poor Carolan away. He instantly sung, accompanied by his harp, the following lines:

"What a pity hell's gates were not kept by O'Flynn!
So surly a dog would let nobody in."

How often, in my school-boy day,
Have I renounc'd the school-boy's play,
To ramble, lonely, o'er thy green,
And see again some favourite scene;
Or up thy emerald hills to roam,
And watch the curling smoke of home,
And think upon the mother dear,
Who then, on me, was thinking there—
Or ask the peasant, as he toil'd,
And haply at my fancy smil'd,
If he thought the ocean bold,
Which awfully beneath us roll'd
Ever saw such fruits and flowers,
Such mountains, fields, and mossy bowers,
Or such a lovely land as ours?

Oh! then it joy'd my heart, to see
The patriot son of industry
Hold out to me his rugged hand,
And swear not such another land
Our Sovereign had at his command;
Or give me half his scanty store,
And sorrow that he had no more.
Then would he, in his simple way,
Along the neighbouring valley stray,
To tell me all that surge had seen,
And all the glories of that green
In Erin's elder day.
Alas! where once the palace rose,
And spread its gales the festal bower,
There now the desert hawthorn blows—

Or browsing on the woodbine flower,
The red-deer fearless stray!
That spot, where, as the sunset threw
On wood and lake its purpling hue,
The harp and horn sounded high,
The call of graceful revelry.
Now, nought is heard but shrill and harsh
The bittern booming in the marsh,
Or the lone shepherd's shout of fear,
To fright the savage prowling near:
Now all is featureless and lone,
Save where upon the heathy ground
Lie the huge heaps of printless stone,
By time and tempest scatter'd round.

Bleaching in the mountain blast *,
And mouldering in the mountain rain,
The symbol of the ages past,
The ruins frown in proud disdain,
Casting their chill and mournful shade
Upon the spot where low are laid
Their mighty chiefs and warrior men—
Their murder'd friends and heroes slain;
And all the trophies of their glorious reign.

* Some of the ruined abbeys and castles in Ireland appear to have been of the noblest order of architecture, and to mark an æra in the annals of that ill-fated country, in which the arts must have flourished in the highest degree of cultivation; but now, alas!

——Hic, inter flumina nota
Et fontes sacros, frigus captabis opacum.
VIRGIL, ECLOGA I.

Alas! and shall that aged pile
Never in ancient splendour smile?
And shall the lonely owlet hoot
For ever through its ivied wall?
And shall no more the lover's lute
Awake the happy signal call,
Or grace the pleasures of its stately hall?
Oh, never, if in evil hour
A foreign foot attaint our soil!
Oh, never! if the Despot's power
Pollutes our pure, our lovely isle!
His aid is murder in disguise;
His triumph, Freedom's obsequies;
His faith is fraud; his wisdom, guile;
Creation withers in his smile—

'Mid ruin upon ruin hurl'd,
He flames—the Ætna of the world!
No offering can avert his wrath,
No human feeling cross his path.
See Spain in his embraces die,
His ancient friend, his firm ally!
See hapless Portugal, who thought
A *common creed* her safety bought:—
A common creed!—alas! his life
Has been one bloody, impious strife!
Beneath his torch the altars burn,
And blush on the polluted urn—
Beneath his Christian foot is trod
The symbol of the Christian God!
The plunder'd fane—the murder'd priest—
The Holy Pontiff's age opprest!

Religion's blush, and Nature's sigh,
Proclaim NAPOLEON's *piety!!*
Where'er his locust legions veer,
Ruin, and woe, and want, are there—
And dreams of future murders sweep
Across their fever'd hour of sleep.

Thus, 'mid the desert's cheerless blight,
A vulture pauses in his flight,
And on some rock's congenial breast
Unwilling takes his wither'd rest,
Again on Rapine's wing to rise,
The taint and terror of the skies.
Peasant of ERIN! think of this,
Encircled by domestic bliss;
And when, with wife and children dear,
You take your sweet, though homely cheer,

Teach them to bless their heavenly Sire,
That they enjoy their evening fire,
And live where they can share with thee
The profits of their industry.

I love thee, ERIN; yet, before
The Gallic fiend should taint thy shore,
Myself would seize the flaming brand,
And burn the verdure of the land.
In vain has Nature bless'd our isle *,
And banish'd venom from its soil—

* There is not, in the known world, an island more blessed by nature than Ireland, or one in which the will of God appears to be more thwarted by the profligate impiety of man. "Abundat porco, hædo, agno, gallina, lacte, caseo, melle—jam hortum ipsi agricolæ succidiam alteram appellant—nec vero segetibus solum et pratis, et vineis, et arbustis læta est, sed etiam portis et pomariis: tum pecudum pastu, apium examinibus, florum

In vain adorn'd our landscape green,
With hill, and vale, and varied scene—
In vain with music fill'd our brakes,
With tufted islets deck'd our lakes;
And such high mountain glories spread,
That heaven rests upon their head;
In vain bestow'd us beauty bright,
To grace the day and bless the night;
If thus we trust the tempter's voice,
And violate our paradise!

omnium varietate*!" But her rulers!—alas! the same writer has well described them—" sunt morosi, et anxii, et iracundi, et difficiles: si quærimus, etiam *avari!*" In vain has every blessing which can delight the eye or indulge the appetite, been lavishly squandered on our lovely garden, if the Harpy Intolerance is suffered to pollute its beauty and prey on its abundance.

* Cicero de Senectute.

A Purer Star ascends the sky,
And beams its radiance from on high,
On many a glorious trophy won,
And many a deed of valour done,
Adorning thy captivity!
Sweetly it smiles, as if to say,
Soon, soon shall dawn the rising day
Of such a nation's liberty*!
Strange, that a noble, generous land,
Enabling others to withstand
The foreign tyrant's fierce command,
Should not itself be free!
Strange, that a warrior, bold and brave,
Should o'er the foe his banner wave,
Yet reap no fruit of victory!

* Quoties nox oppressit cum mane cepisset.—CICERO.

No matter what the bar to fame,
Nor how disqualified the claim,
ERIN has sent her warriors bright,
To win the laurels of the fight;
From him, her chief and champion bold,
Down to the simple peasant name,
Whose whole nobility is fame—
He, who on Barossa's height
Stopp'd the Eagle in his flight,
And spurn'd its crest of gold *!
No; not a trophy of the day,
Which ERIN did not bear away—

* It was Serjeant Masterson, a native of Roscommon in Ireland, who took the famous Imperial Eagle at the battle of Barossa. This ensign was encircled with a golden wreath, as a particular mark of the Emperor's favour. The Prince, Regent, ever anxious to reward merit, has since promoted its brave captor.

And see where comes the God of war,
In his blood-emblazon'd car!
Its front of fire—its seat of steel—
The forked lightning is its wheel!
And see, triumphant with him, see
The laurell'd goddess VICTORY!
They pause—she waves her falchion sharp,
Sounds her high horn, and leans upon the
HARP *.

* It is worthy of remark, that there is scarcely a single name (except that of the brave General Graham), of any note in the Peninsula, at present, which is not Irish—Wellington, Pack, Carrol, O'Donnel, Blake, Trant, and Beresford, form a proud and dazzling constellation in the night of Ireland's sorrow. Unhappy countrymen! in America you lead the bar—in Spain you guide the army—in England you adorn the senate—at home you are—*disqualified!*

FINIS.

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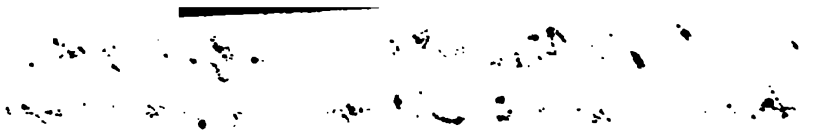
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